THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XIV | New York, Wednesday, June 10, 1931 | Number 6

EDITORIAL BOARD

MICHAEL WILLIAMS, Editor
GEORGE N. SHUSTER, Managing Editor
MARY KOLARS, Assistant Editor
FREDERIC THOMPSON, Assistant Editor

JOHN F. McCORMICK, Business Manager

EDITORIAL COUNCIL

CARLTON J. H. HAYES
T. LAWRASON RIGGS
RICHARD DANA SKINNER
JAMES J. WALSH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Caesar Challenges Peter 141
Week by Week 142
The Taxes 145
The Catholic Birth Rate.....J. Elliot Ross 147
How Sleep the Brave .....John K. Ryan 150
These Neurotic Heroines.....Katherine Brégy 152
Sacrament (*verse*).....John Richard Moreland 154
War Guilt and Revision.....Ernest Dimnet 155
Southern Floodlands (*verse*).....Ernest Hartsock 156
The End of an Age.....James W. Lane 157
Two West Indians.....Vincent Engels 157
The Play and Screen.....Richard Dana Skinner 159
Communications 160
Books.....T. Lawrason Riggs, Michael Williams, Shaemas O'Sheel, Charles Willis Thompson, Frank O'Hara, Eleanor Downing 162

Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Readers' Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*.

Published weekly and copyrighted 1931, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single Copies: $.10.

CAESAR CHALLENGES PETER

TODAY, as we go to press, Mussolini and the supreme chiefs of Fascism are to meet, to consider the next steps that are to follow the challenge thrown down to the Pope by Mussolini's edict dissolving throughout Italy the entire organization known as Catholic Action. The Pope promptly met that challenge by placing all groups of Catholic Action under the direct tutelage and management of the bishops, who in turn are of course directly responsible to the Holy See. This measure has two important aspects. First, the direct authority of the bishops of the respective dioceses may thus be exerted more immediately to restrain any hasty or injudicious measures on the part of Catholic Action groups, humanly incensed by the violent and tyrannical attacks made upon them. The second and much more important point (according to the interpretation of Arnaldo Cortesi, the New York *Times's* correspondent and a very well-informed observer) is that the Fascists are now deprived of the subtle yet useful distinction they have hitherto drawn between Catholic Action and the Holy See when opposing and persecuting the former as an anti-Fascist organization, while simultaneously professing their loyalty as Catholics to the Holy See. The Pope in assuming entire responsibility for Catholic Action wipes out this distinction. "Any action against or criticism of that organization," writes Mr. Cortesi, "automatically becomes action against or criticism of the Holy See itself. . . . . The controversy can no longer be regarded as a journalistic squabble between the Catholic and Fascist press. The Vatican and the Fascist government now find themselves face to face."

According to the same observer, Mussolini has left one door open by which he may, if he so wills it, escape for the moment the full force of the clash with the Church which is imminent. He may decree that if and when public order has been restored, to preserve which the closing of the Catholic clubs was declared to be a necessary step, the clubs may reopen, on condition that their members refrain either as individuals or as groups from that covert or open opposition to Fascism of which they stand accused.

This step, however, would merely postpone the definite collision with the Catholic Church which the claims, and the actions to enforce the claims, of absolute state authority made by Mussolini, make inevitable.

It is of course quite clear that if Mussolini instead of using this door to a compromise decides to proceed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the crushing of Catholic Action, he will succeed so far as physical, exterior victory is concerned. Fascism rests upon material force. Its supreme dogma is the superiority of the state: the supremacy of the visible, material, objective organization of the Fascist government. It does not deny or attack religion, as the Communist system of Soviet Russia does; but it subordinates religion to the state. Religion for Fascism is at best the ally, preferably the servant, of the state. Fascism claims, and at present is enforcing the claim, to judge, on its own terms, according to its own criterion, all the declarations or acts of religious organizations which challenge, or even tend to challenge, the absolutism of state authority.

The Church in Italy has no similar answer. The primacy of spiritual force over material force can only triumph through spiritual means. Caesar is again facing Peter in that arena of the world debate between the material and the spiritual which is eternal Rome. Emperors, kings, conquerors, statesmen, parties, have challenged Peter during nearly twenty centuries. The embodiments of material, secular purposes and powers take many shapes, from Nero to Mussolini, and no doubt will continue to do so; but Peter, in the person of the Pope, remains undefeated and the spiritual remains superior, because it must.

But only believers in God can derive any solace from that fact; and even the firmest believers cannot escape agony of soul and desolation of heart and mind as they observe the portents crowding so thickly upon the attention of the world which indicate the strains and clashes caused by the imperialisms and jealous, suspicious, almost insanely sensitive nationalisms which have been so accentuated since the war.

Can a spiritualized patriotism, which does truly exist in all nations, but which is less well organized, less known, and less effective than the militant, chauvinistic forms of nationalism, hope to increase rapidly and effectively enough to avert that maelstrom of world war which even the most ferocious nationalistic leaders dread but which their actions inevitably prepare? This is the supreme question now facing human society in the temporal sphere. Catholic thinkers of the highest eminence, but, alas, at present at least, of extremely limited influence, are dealing with it hopefully. For example, Peter Wust, the German Catholic philosopher, has recently united with Jacques Maritain, the French philosopher, and Christopher Dawson, an English thinker, in a series of essays directly aimed at building up a truly Catholic super-nationalism of cooperative intellectual action, in the hope of aiding that salvation of civilization which is desired by all men and women of good-will, but which is so directly menaced by the rivalries and the jealousies which excessive nationalism at once provokes and increases. Both Wust and Maritain appeal to their own national spirit to inspire the leaders in this movement toward unity. Neither would deny the just and proper pride of nationality. But they would have both German and French Catholics realize a greater good than materialistic nationalism. "The sublime apostolate," in Wust's phrase, of leading the nations back toward the recognition of the supremacy of spiritual values, is a joint enterprise. English Catholics feel the same impulse, and recognize its reasonability—its common sense, in the highest form of the words. Surely American Catholics should say yes to this. And should act.

But how? Well, we do not presume to be teachers; but we may point to the teacher of us all, to the one super-national organization in the world, the one universal leader of moral and spiritual action among all races and all nations—the Vatican, the Catholic Church, the Holy Father of humanity. Absolute, unquestioning, enthusiastic obedience and loyalty of all Catholics, everywhere, to the spiritual and moral teaching and leadership of the Pope. That is the fundamental plank of the platform of Catholic Action. It is the best hope for human liberty. It points out the only possible pathway to peace among the nations. It includes, nay, it demands, the fullest coöperation with those who are not Catholics, but whose principles and methods are consonant with Catholic principles. Properly understood, it cannot conflict with just loyalty and obedience to legitimate civil governments anywhere, or at any time. Perhaps more than Catholics anywhere else in the world, American Catholics know through experience how their spiritual and moral obedience to their Church may subsist with and strengthen and enlighten their loyalty and obedience to their civil government. Perhaps their temporal mission to the world is to consist in demonstrating that fact so luminously that it may serve as a pattern of practical action in the most delicate and difficult sphere of all human affairs, the relations between the Church and the State.

However that may be, at present American Catholics have one strict duty incumbent upon them, to which they were summoned by the Pope himself when he asked for the prayers of all his children. We need more than ever to remember that prayer is no mere substitute for action, but the essence of action—it is pure power, it is the invocation of the Will of God, which whether it decree sorrow or joy at any particular moment, whether it answer yes or no to our particular human desires, always gives the best.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE ADVERTISING which suggested a cigarette instead of a sweet has been taken over bodily as a formula by various prescribers to the present depression. At least that is what the list of panaceas suggests—panaceas which had their innings too at the recent, otherwise admirable Export Trade Convention in New York. We had a strong protective tariff when business started down hill; therefore we ought to lop off half of the customs levies now. The country is pessimistic; accordingly it should juggernaut

Upholstery for Trade

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itself into optimism. Business has prided itself heretofore on a high pay schedule; as a consequence it should lower wages as the commodity index declines. That this list of polaric contrasts is comforting is proved by the long array of orators who derive seemingly real pleasure from expounding them. But in all sober truth no one can possibly take them seriously, despite the modicum of sense in all of them. By what earthly manner of means could tariff schedules be cut one-half? And though optimism has gone into an unparalleled decline, who does not realize by this time that when it is blind and bland it has the value of half a dozen random firecrackers exploding on the village green? The chief value of such affirmations is the fact that they testify to the quandaries which the modern industrial system faces. Surely the business collapse has lasted long enough now to make one thing perfectly clear: either we will get out of trouble by applying with absolute courage a plan carefully thought out and rigidly adhered to, or we will get out when the storm has spent itself, and natural economic forces usher in better business weather.

IN VIEW of the possibility of his being his party's next candidate for the Presidency, it was significant that one of Governor Roosevelt's first words on returning from abroad was praise of the French tariffs on agricultural products. It was an anomaly in more than one sense. To begin with, France has been most outspoken in its condemnation of our own tariffs against her products, so that, at least by implication, Governor Roosevelt occasions the sound reflection that the principal purpose of tariffs is to permit nations to put their houses in order, and in the doing of this, they are not only within their rights, but reasonable. French protected agriculture is today one of the few agricultural units which does not seem to be in a very bad condition. True, not only has French agriculture the benefit of protection, but also, as the governor pointed out, by some wise dispensation of French social institutions, in France are some 5,000,000 small and independent farmers who as free men cultivating their bits of property are one of the most stable and conservative (in the best sense of that word) influences in the country. Aside from the imponderable element of contentment which this large, stable class represents, is its importance to the country as an orderly and predictable internal market for French industry. When it is in this favorable condition of balance, a country is in a unique position to enjoy the exportation of capital.

Parochial Balance

THE UNITED STATES, though potentially far richer than France in the diversity of its natural resources, has lost its balance, and with its farms mortgaged to the hilt, and its large agricultural class financially prostrate, industry has suffered as well. It is a difficult problem. The "paper" on American farms cannot be repudiated, even though, like that other "Eureka" of canceling international obligations, some form of repudiation would seem not only inevitable, but also a solution which would in the end be to the advantage of those to whom the crushing obligations are due. Out of necessity, we believe the solution will stem. It will be a slow change in our present social institutions. There will be a return to a more parochially self-sufficient organization of society. In short, we believe that it is at least a major probability that a peak in great impersonal corporate activities has been passed, and that instead of a smashing of the tariff walls, and an increase in that at present rather sick monster, world trade, we shall see an increase in small, careful and locally self-contained social units. Russia's hammering on the machinery of world trade may well hasten the change. In Governor Roosevelt's case, we may see the anomaly of a leader of the formerly free trade Democratic party wedded to protection for the promotion of the Jeffersonian principle of state's rights, and something more, state's self-sufficiency. Under his leadership New York State has been doing successful pioneer work in state planning of land utilization, assisted by a survey initiated by the governor and the state Conservation Department, ably headed by Henry Morgenthau, jr.

AT THE recent meeting of the New York State Chapter of the Knights of Columbus, according to news reports, serious attention was given to the question of gang films. This type of entertainment, in the words of one of the resolutions considered, "creates a criminal instinct in our youth." We all must realize that this does not put the matter too strongly—nor is the problem confined to the films. If the Knights put into effect their project of trying to dissuade Hollywood from the further exploitation of this field, they will be doing one of the vital things which needs to be done; but there will still remain the novels, the sensational magazines and the news stories —above all, the news stories. The words of Police Commissioner Mulrooney, of New York City, quoted in these columns a few weeks ago, recur in this connection. He warned the country most emphatically that the concentrated and incessant publicity given to criminals by the yellow press—the devices for dramatizing their lives and building up the impression of the importance of their personalities—give these types a factitious heroism which inordinately impresses the imagination of the unformed and undisciplined reader.

Gang Films

THE MERE attraction of the youthful mind to outlawry is, of course, not new. That mind is polarized by nature, it would seem, to the excitement, the adventure and, it must be confessed, the anarchy, of the desperado's career. But when the youth's environment ministers to this interest within bounds, there is reason to think that it is a healthy form of sublimation and escape: there are sanitive reasons, among others, for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the tale of Dead-Eye Dick and the ballad of Robin Hood. Remove or weaken the corrective and balancing forces in the youth's environment, and at the same time enormously increase this one type of stimulus, and you produce a social milieu that serves as a very fair kindergarten of crime. That is what we are facing. It is perhaps useless now to analyze the vicious-circle process by which it has come about, to decide whether the first step was the weakening of the home or the strengthening of outside influences. It is a fact that the source of moral authority, the center of moral gravity, has shifted more and more from the home to those influences, good and bad; and that the most important of them are the agencies which make their money by providing herd entertainment. This means, of course, that, while the appeal of such entertainment must be on a common, that is, a low, level, its technique must be the reverse of poor; and the very skill of presentation which makes it a marketable commodity is the chief source of its moral mischief. We have spoken above of the cleverness of the tabloids. The gangster movies, to which the Knights are turning much-needed attention, are often brilliantly acted and directed. Their detail is conveyed with a vividness almost hypnotic. We wish the Knights the success they merit in promoting a right general feeling about this gravely important matter.

Out of the Darkness

NEGRO art and literature in the United States have long since been decorated with blue ribbons and gold medals. While we are far from sharing the view, which Count Keyserling toys with affectionately, that this creative effort is the most original and indigenous observable here, we do feel very strongly that American Negro "culture" has expressed itself with amazing vitality and plastic charm. How astonishing it is, therefore, to find that Americans have done least to unearth and understand the civilization of Africa itself. Here the British, the Germans, the Austrians and the French have accomplished great work, possibly because their interest was stimulated by practical colonial associations. Today the sum total of what has been learned is best presented for review by the famous Africa Institut, at Frankfurt, which Leo Frobenius has slowly built up into a thing of wonder and priceless value. During the month of April, however, the true individuality of Frobenius's effort was revealed in an exposition which, for the first time, afforded a complete synthesis of prehistoric African painting. Most of these pictures, copied from caves and rocks by a corps of artists, display the mingled naturalism and mysticism which are now thought to have characterized the primitive civilization of the Dark Continent. Previous showing of some of them, especially in Paris, aroused the enthusiasm of artists and students, but it was the recent Frankfurt exposition that first revealed the full scope and significance of Frobenius's explorations. We can wish our country nothing better than some benefactor who will bring the exposition to New York or some other city. For this country has become, more than any other, the Negro's second home.

INDEED Frobenius is not far from seeing in this fact the clue both to the decline of Africa and to general European ignorance of its culture during many centuries. He holds that the narratives of early explorers, those who went through the continent during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, testify to the existence of harmonious and inherently complete native cultures in all the territory between the Sahara and the Cape. Then came the slave-trader, in whose eyes the Negro was only a savage much better suited to servitude on American or other plantations than to life in his own land. The traffic profited by all manner of things, even by the Biblical reference to the curse which Noah laid on two of his sons, in order to carry through a spoliation that was at the same time the destruction of a world order extant throughout thousands of years. Europe forgot that in Africa it might have profited by its only chance to learn how primitive man had actually lived—and to see that he was never an animal, but always an artist and a worshiper. Frobenius devoted every bit of his extraordinary vigor to the task of reconstructing the African scene; and while not all his conclusions are to be accepted at face value, the mere fact that the illustrious Abbé Breuil and a dozen other famous archaeologists journeyed to Frankfurt to speak at the exposition is in itself an endorsement that needs little complement.

Why Libraries?

NOTHING in New York is more novel than a placard appearing just now on the bulletin board of one of our best-known clubs. This is to the effect that several volumes "have been missing" from the library, and that somebody has noticed their absence. We shall refrain from commenting on the minor moral possibilities suggested by this announcement. Has the depression undermined somebody's integrity? Or has a kleptomaniac smuggled himself into the membership? Such questions are of no importance compared with the discovery that a club library has been unearthed which shows signs of use. That no group of men can possibly band themselves together, rent a building and charge initiation fees without having a library on the premises is a truism of long standing. Something of the old manor house tradition lingers on in such places, accentuating the decorative effect of books, preferably leather-bound complete works. These every visitor or candidate must view once, but until now we had no idea that a club member in good standing would permit himself to take a chair and a book. Nor is this abstinence surprising, in view of what most club libraries contain. We hold that the case we have unearthed is worthy of serious sleuthing by American book sellers, now hard put to it, who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might eventually introduce a gentle Viennese custom. There the manager of a café turns over a key to the house to a few cronies, who thumb journals and drink chocolate so industriously that the public is decoyed inside. Who knows what a few stowaways in club libraries, skilful enough to smuggle out a book or two, might accomplish?

Work with Confidence

AS ONE of the best answers to those industrialists who believe that job insurance, or anything approaching it, would be a bad thing for the common weal in the long run because it would deprive labor of a stimulus to work zealously and well in order to hold its job, we are quoting remarks made recently by Mr. Gerard Swope, president of the General Electric Company, in a radio speech in the program of *Collier's Magazine*. These remarks, paralleling somewhat those we recently mentioned which were delivered by Mr. Swope before the International Chamber of Commerce, together with the outspoken statement of Mr. James A. Farrell, president of the United States Steel Corporation, in regard to the suicidal and unsound price-cutting which in the present general business depression is destroying confidence and wiping out the legitimate margins of profit which allow for the employment of men and the sustaining of wages—not to speak of dividends—are of a character which impresses us with considerable faith in the essential soundness of our business leadership. Said Mr. Swope: "A human being laid off for lack of work, after the harrowing experience of endeavoring to find work, is never again as self-respecting and self-reliant a human being as he was before. Such an employee, with constant fear hanging over him of being laid off, approaches his work with a harassed mind and as a task to be accomplished with the largest amount of compensation to be immediately secured. He cannot find from his work the satisfaction that will produce the best results for himself and the industry. It is confidently believed that if the fear of lack of work were removed from the mind of the working man, the quality of workmanship would be better; he would feel free to suggest better methods, which would lower costs and be reflected eventually in lower selling prices to the public and assure a wider sphere of use for the article itself."

On a Lark

MUCH notice has been given to the excursion of the American Institute of Architects to the left bank of the Seine to plant a flagstaff in the courtyard of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, as a gesture of affection for Paris associations. The party chartered a boat and, going "stag," planned to lounge around in pajamas during the crossing. In Paris the official banner of the delegation is to be placed before the Café des Deux Magots whence the operations of the group will be conducted. The *New Yorker* closed a somewhat cynical account of this program with the words "Just a boy, America, just a boy!" As we watched the departure of the American Banker, temporarily converted into the American Architect, our own reflections were more somber. The event had more meaning than another junket of tired business men. This group represents one of the finest factors in intellectual cooperation between France and America.

CURIOUSLY there were few young men among them. The majority of the delegation were around fifty. These are returning to a memory that still burns bright. Their enthusiasm does not seem to be shared by the younger members of the profession who have also studied at the Beaux-Arts. Of course lack of the younger element may be explained by hard times and the obvious fact that they are less free to take a prolonged vacation. But this does not entirely explain foregoing an opportunity for six weeks' contact with the most successful members of the Institute. The truth is that the Quartier Latin has lost much of its glamor since the war. Many who work in Paris nowadays, leave with a deep disgust for the fakirs, freaks and derelicts who have not even the grace to be romantic in their driftings. Trilby is dead! And it is a pity! Sixty Americans will lift a last banner at the Deux Magots to her tender and romantic memory.

THE TAXES

ONE ASPECT of the American prosperity decade which citizens have not generally appreciated is the marked benignity of the federal tax collector. That gentleman seems hardly to have reminded us of the tremendous indebtedness created by the war, which in 1919 not merely presented the nation with a bill for nearly twenty-five and a quarter billion dollars, but left behind an army of disabled veterans and a bonus law paralleling in a measure the pension legislation which followed 1865. During the years that have passed since, customs revenues remained fairly stable; indirect taxes were removed in rapid succession, so that the bottle of bevo and the roll of films entered a household budget free of a tip to the government; the income tax gradually lost its significance for the less well-paid American and confined its ravages to the higher-ups. If the assessor still loomed up formidably, that was largely due to increased municipal and state expenditures which placed a heavy levy on real estate and beyond that on the renter. Such a situation was, let it be confessed, abnormal. Bills have to be paid by the people who contract them; and the fact that the citizens of the United States were virtually able to forget that fact while wage-earners in other lands were being dunned harder and harder is surely one of the anomalies of fiscal history.

Just what happened during the past twelve years and what is happening now forms the theme of addresses by Secretary Mellon and Under Secretary Ogden Mills. Both begin with noting that "for the fiscal year 1931

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Treasury will show the first deficit since 1919." This sudden halt has two sides. First, the action of steadily retiring the public debt has been stopped. How rapidly this process was being carried through is evident from the records, which show that the average annual reduction was about 4 percent, and that therefore, could the pace have been maintained, the total indebtedness would have vanished in less than a quarter of a century. Second, the running expenses of the government are now greater than its income. Were it not for moneys demanded for veteran relief and the special funds employed to aid agriculture, the budget would, however, nearly balance itself. Two facts must be noted in this connection: the total of outstanding inter-Ally debts has a nominal value of more than eleven billion dollars —almost three-fourths of what the United States now owes—and much of the sum now charged to the government represents an increase in the actual national wealth in the form of productive activity by citizens. In short, it is impossible to see how the fiscal position of the United States could be more fortunate.

But does the present decline constitute a danger? What has caused it, how long is it likely to continue and what remedies can be proposed? In reply to the first query Mr. Mills says frankly and, we think, correctly that a balanced budget every year seems desirable. "While theoretically a series of surpluses might be applied to strengthening the financial structure, . . . insistence on a balanced budget is the one means that I know of of compelling a government to live within its income and of making the people realize that if they desire to expand the services of government they must inevitably look to increased contributions in the form of taxes," he declares. On the other hand he feels that "the present year taken by itself offers a most inadequate criterion by which to judge the ability of the present federal revenue system to meet the government's normal requirements." Now what is the central characteristic of that system? We think Mr. Mills is correct in arguing that (a) the money requirements of the federal government will be greater than they were before the war and (b) that the scope of the collector is decidedly more limited than it previously was.

"We have," he says, "limited the incidence of the individual income tax to some 2,500,000 taxpayers, and of this number some 380,000 pay about 97 percent of the tax." And since income taxation produces, roughly speaking, two-thirds of the government revenue, it follows that 65 percent of the annual Treasury receipts come from the 380,000 people aforementioned. Secretary Mellon bluntly criticizes this arrangement, holding such a restricted tax incidence all right and stable enough for "prosperous years," but adding: "If the situation should be reversed and prosperity should begin to recede, it might result in such a shrinkage in incomes that the government's revenue would be seriously affected. Obviously, we should retain some other taxes which can be relied on in times when a slowing up of prosperity may cause a falling off in incomes." He is also careful to state that he said the same thing three years ago.

Now the average person's reaction to these remarks is likely enough to be: the 380,000 referred to own about nine-tenths of the national wealth. If therefore any more tax collecting has to be done, let it come out of their pockets and not out of the meager savings of citizens hard pressed to keep sundry wolves from the door. To this response no immediate rejoinder can be given. If the great bulk of voters hold that taxing their incomes is not at all to their liking, they will have their way in the long run. Of course the rich man may "take it out" on the public in other forms—by curtailing the sums he gives to charity, personal expenditures and so forth. Here we are certainly face to face with one bad result of very unequal distribution of wealth. It is perilously easy to make a political noli-me-tangere of a tax issue, just as it is possible to hold up a city's transportation progress by insisting on a five-cent fare. On the other hand, a country which spends money without being responsible for paying it back is about as sure to acquire bad fiscal habits as a pack of college youngsters with unlimited allowances. So far we have escaped most of the deplorable results solely because the prosperity wave was strong enough to bring in water faster than we as a nation could scoop it out.

There are many reasons for holding that taxes were reduced too quickly and abruptly during post-war years. Economy had become a slogan the exact import of which was not understood. Fundamentally there is no particular "saving" in the mere fact that a government spends no money; what counts is how and for what the money is spent. Nor is the curtailment of tax schedules in itself a manifestation of economy. We do not believe that the "good times" of the past decade will be restored soon enough to avoid reforming our fiscal policy in some respects. World trade is too profoundly shaken to permit of such a hope, and the mere fact that foreign debts must inevitably be revised before normal conditions can be restored is another serious challenge to optimism. One way out is theoretically very easy. Comparing present with former conditions, Mr. Mills says: "Distilled spirits and fermented liquors are now, of course, a negligible source of revenue." A change in the Volstead Act to permit the sale of beverages of a higher alcoholic content, which might then be taxed, would afford a very considerable revenue and at the same time reduce current expenditures. Nevertheless there is no immediate probability of such a change.

Unless times improve far more speedily than the omens indicate, the tax issue must loom large in approaching political debates. It will then be most interesting and instructive to observe the several spokesmen —to see not who offers the most consolation and hokum, but who deals with the problem with the greatest frankness and integrity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CATHOLIC BIRTH RATE

By J. ELLIOT ROSS

In the following paper Father Ross reverts to an old and unfortunately established fact that Catholics commit sins. To what extent does violation of the ethical doctrine anent contraception figure in the list? Or how does this doctrine modify the work being done by the Church in America? Response to both queries is sought by the author in the statistics furnished by "The Catholic Directory." Whether or not "figures lie," whether or not the conclusions to which Father Ross arrives are accurate, it is for the reader to judge. We hold the subject important and interesting enough to merit attention.—The Editors.

EVERYONE knows the official attitude of the Catholic Church condemning contraception. In his recent encyclical on marriage the Pope simply reiterated the traditional standpoint. And the unyieldingness of Pius XI has been thrown into high relief by the action of the Anglican bishops, the Federal Council of Churches and other Protestant bodies giving a qualified approval to contraception.

But the question still remains as to how far Catholics are living up to this position of their Church. The Catholic Church's condemnation of contraception is no more emphatic than its condemnation of drunkenness, and yet there are Catholics who get drunk. Some members of the Holy Name Society sometimes swear. In fact, the very institution of confession is an open acknowledgment that Catholics commit sins. How far are Catholics committing this sin of contraception?

It is often said that mores are more powerful than morals. And certainly we may say that the mores of America sanction contraception. Do Catholics follow the morals of their Church or the mores, the social customs, of the country in which they live? When one sees the one-child or two-child family in Catholic circles, one wonders whether the mores have triumphed over morals.

Of course, we cannot tell with absolute accuracy the extent to which Catholics are practising contraception. But the Catholic birth rate will throw considerable light on the question. The difficulty is to get the Catholic birth rate. For the federal census in calculating birth rates makes no distinction between churches, and the federal census of religions does not attempt to calculate any birth rates at all.

However, "The Official Catholic Directory" gives the population and the infant baptisms for a number of dioceses. And as practically all children born of Catholic parents are baptized within a short time after birth, the Catholic birth rate for these dioceses can be very easily computed by dividing the infant baptisms by the population.

In the 1931 "Directory" eighty-four dioceses reported the infant baptisms, deaths and population for the preceding year. These dioceses embraced about 60 percent of the total Catholic population reported, or 12,517,528. And as they are scattered all over the country, we have a very good sample of the whole Catholic population.[1] The results of calculating the Catholic birth and death rates are summarized as follows: births per 1,000, in dioceses, 1930, 32.3; births per 1,000, in registration area, 1929,[1] 18.9; deaths per 1,000, in dioceses, 1930, 12.0; deaths per 1,000, in registration area, 1928,[2] 12.0; excess births over deaths, in dioceses, 20.3; excess births over deaths, in registration area, 7.9.

Calculating the births and deaths to the nearest decimal point per 1,000 of the Catholic population in each diocese and comparing them with the rates for the state in which the episcopal city happens to be, we get some very interesting results. The only Catholic diocese which falls as low as the lowest state birth rate for 1929 is St. Joseph, Missouri, with 14.0. The birth rate for the whole state of Missouri was 17.0, but the birth rate for Oregon was 14.1. Immediately, however, the Catholic birth rate takes a jump to 20.2 (St. Augustine, Florida), which is 1.3 above the average for the registration area. Thereafter the Catholic birth rates increase up to 53.8 for Tucson, Arizona.

Fourteen dioceses have a birth rate below the highest state birth rate of 24.7, which is for North Carolina—omitting New Mexico, as that would be influenced too much by the very large Catholic population. These dioceses are: St. Joseph, 14.0; St. Augustine, 20.2; St. Louis, 20.5; Duluth, 22.1; Seattle, 22.2; Spokane, 22.6; Kansas City, 23.0; Pittsburgh Greek, 23.4; Springfield, Illinois, 23.5; Covington, 23.8; Little Rock, 24.3; and Oklahoma City, San Francisco and Toledo with 24.4. The remaining seventy dioceses have a higher birth rate than even the highest state birth rate—disregarding New Mexico.

Adding up the total number of infant baptisms and the total populations reported for all eighty-four di-

[1] The dioceses were: Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dubuque, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Portland (Oregon), St. Louis, St. Paul, San Francisco, Santa Fé, Albany, Alexandria, Altoona, Amarillo, Baker City, Belleville, Bismarck, Boise, Burlington, Charleston, Cheyenne, Cleveland, Columbus, Concordia, Corpus Christi, Covington, Crookston, Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duluth, El Paso, Erie, Galveston, Grand Island, Grand Rapids, Green Bay, Harrisburg, Helena, Kansas City, La Crosse, Lafayette, Leavenworth, Lincoln, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Louisville, Marquette, Monterey-Fresno, Nashville, Natchez, Newark, Ogdensburg, Oklahoma City, Peoria, Pittsburgh, Raleigh, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, St. Augustine, St. Cloud, St. Joseph, Savannah, Scranton, Seattle, Sioux City, Sioux Falls, Spokane, Springfield (Ill.), Springfield (Mass.), Superior, Syracuse, Toledo, Trenton, Tucson, Wheeling, Wichita, Wilmington, Winona, Ukrainian Greek, Pittsburgh Greek.

[2] These are the latest years for which official figures are available. As the birth rate has been going down rather steadily, it is probable that the rate for 1930 is somewhat less than 18.9.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

oceses, we get an average birth rate of 32.3. This is 13.4 above the average for the registration area in 1929, and 7.6 above the highest state figure, and a national birth rate as high as this antedates 1880.

It is true that the Catholic rate computed in this way would be a little higher than for the general population, because in a Catholic census we do not count all the parents of Catholic children. An allowance should therefore be made for marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics. Unfortunately, only six dioceses (Milwaukee, St. Louis, Des Moines, Fargo, Lafayette and Omaha) distinguish in their reports between marriages where both parties are Catholics and those where only one party is a Catholic. These dioceses embrace about 5 percent of the total Catholic population. The lowest percentage of mixed marriages reported is 7 (Lafayette) and the highest 34 (Des Moines), while the average is 23.

Taking this average, we may allow that one-fourth of the marriages from which Catholic children come are mixed marriages. Then as in such cases we are concerned with only one sex, we halve the total population, and as only women of child-bearing age would have children (and they constitute about a third of the total number of women), we take a third of this half. One-fourth, or 25 percent of this, would be approximately 4 percent. Reducing, then, the average Catholic birth rate 4 percent, we get as a corrected average, 31.0. This is still considerably higher than the highest state rate, and greatly in excess of the average for the registration area.

But if we should reduce the Catholic birth rate by allowing for the mixed marriages, we should also reduce the birth rate for the non-Catholic population below the figures for the total population, because the higher birth rate for Catholics has affected these figures. This would bring the birth rate for non-Catholics down to 16.2 or 16.5, according as we make an allowance for mixed marriages or not.

Naturally, however, the question occurs as to the reliability of the Catholic figures on which these computations are based. Can "The Official Catholic Directory" be trusted? Well, it can certainly be trusted to the same extent for the population figures as the federal census of religion can be trusted. For the Census Bureau simply gets its figures from the church officials. And although the population figures are not in all cases based upon an actual census, the figures for infant baptisms ought to be accurate. Canon law requires pastors under a serious obligation to record all baptisms. So much may depend on a record of baptism that it is inconceivable that a pastor would be careless in this.

It should be remembered, too, that any tendency on the part of pastors to overestimate their Catholic population by counting lapsed Catholics would reduce the calculated birth rate. For the larger the population to be divided into the number of infant baptisms, the smaller the resulting quotient. If the Catholic birth rate had come out consistently lower than the general rate, this might have been accounted for by assuming that pastors had been too optimistic in counting their flocks. But as the Catholic birth rate is consistently higher than the general rate, we may reasonably conclude that the Catholic population is not overestimated.

However, may Catholic population be generally underestimated? May pastors report fewer Catholics than they really have, because they are afraid their diocesan assessments may be increased or their parish divided? I admit that as a pastor I used to report the lowest possible number of Catholics because I wanted to get an addition of territory.

It was partly as a check on this possibility of a reported Catholic population below the actual figures that I calculated the death rates also. A pastor has an obligation to record deaths as well as births. The validity of a marriage may depend upon a person being free to marry through the death of a former spouse, and estates have been settled by the parochial records proving that one person died before another.

Some years ago I went over "The Official Catholic Directory" for 1924 and computed the populations from the deaths by multiplying them by the proper figure considering the death rate for the general population of the respective states. The total Catholic population computed in this way checked within 3.5 percent of the population given in the "Directory." At the same time, I checked by a scatter diagram and by Pearson's formula, the correlation between deaths and population as given for the various dioceses. There was a high degree of correlation.

In the present case, the average death rate for these eighty-four dioceses was 12.0. That is exactly the death rate for the general population of the registration area. In other words, adding up the total number of deaths reported in the registration area and multiplying by 83.33, we get the total population of the registration area. Adding up the total number of deaths reported in "The Official Catholic Directory" and multiplying by this same number, 83.33, we get the total figures given for the Catholic population in these dioceses. Such a close check seem remarkable.

Of course, the chancery offices could compute the Catholic population from the number of deaths by taking the state death rate. That would be one way of accounting for the agreement in the general averages. But it is evident that the chancery offices did not do this, because the death rates of the dioceses vary somewhat from the states rates. In some cases they are higher, in some cases lower than the rate for the state. It is only the general averages that agree exactly.

Putting the figures for the dioceses and for the states side by side, there is nothing that would arouse suspicion except the abnormally low rates for a very few dioceses. The lowest death rate for any state during 1927, the last year for which the figures are available, was that for Idaho, 7.1. St. Augustine, according to the computation from "The Official Catholic Directory," had a death rate of 4.7; Lincoln, 6.1; Amarillo,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

4.0; and Detroit, 3.9. The total population of these four dioceses involves only 6.1 percent of the total Catholic population of all eighty-four dioceses.

There does not seem to be any correlation between the birth and death rates, in the sense that the higher the birth rate the higher the death rate. For one thing, although the Catholic birth rate is 13.4 above the average birth rate for the registration area, the Catholic death rate for the eighty-four dioceses is exactly the same as the death rate for the registration area, 12.0. The highest death rate reported for any state (Vermont and California) is 13.9, and the highest for any diocese (Helena) is 18.8. Fifteen dioceses have higher rates than 13.9. Thirty-eight of the dioceses, or approximately half, have a lower rate than the corresponding states.

Assuming a higher birth rate for Catholics because of their Church's attitude on contraception and approximately the same death rate as for the general population, some writers (both Catholic and non-Catholic) have concluded that it was only a question of time before Catholics would outnumber Protestants. As we speak of race suicide, so we might speak of church suicide. Dr. John A. Ryan, paraphrasing that famous passage of Tertullian about the early Christians, wrote ("Declining Liberty and Other Papers," p. 314):

> We, too, are of yesterday, but we shall be the America of tomorrow; we shall be the majority. We shall occupy and dominate every sphere of activity: the farm, the factory, the counting house, the schools, the professions, the press, legislature. We shall dominate because we shall have the numbers and the intelligence and, above all, the moral strength to struggle and to persevere. To you we shall leave the gods and goddesses which you have made to your own image and likeness, the divinities of ease, and enjoyment, and mediocrity. We shall leave you the comforts of decadence and the sentence of extinction.

And at first sight this result would seem to be fairly close at hand. For by excess of births over deaths Catholics would be increasing nearly five times as rapidly as non-Catholics. But this conclusion assumes that the Church will keep all the members born into it. As a matter of fact, however, more factors have to be taken into consideration than the differences between the birth and death rates.

The Catholic population reported in the 1930 "Official Catholic Directory" was 20,078,202. If the same average birth and death rate held for the dioceses not included in this study, then there should have been a total excess of births over deaths of 407,587. Simply taking the number of converts reported, without making any estimate for the dioceses not giving figures, this gain in Catholics should be increased by 39,528. And some allowance should be made for Catholic immigration. For the whole country there was a net gain by immigration last year of about 175,000. And in 1924 (the last year for which I could find figures) there was a gain of 102,000 from Mexico—Canada and Latin America do not come under the quota. It would seem, therefore, that 60,000 is a very moderate estimate for Catholic immigration. All these factors would make the total Catholic gain in membership over 500,000.

As a matter of fact, however, "The Official Catholic Directory" reported a gain of only 13,391. That is to say, the actual total fell short of the expected total by approximately 500,000. This really means that while making 39,528 converts, the Catholic Church must have lost around half a million born Catholics. A high birth rate is not necessarily the same thing as a high gain in membership for a church.

Indeed, paradoxical as it may seem, a high birth rate may be one factor leading to a small increase in actual membership. Undoubtedly some people who are interested in Catholicism do not allow their interest to go as far as joining the Church because they will not adopt her attitude on contraception. Consequently the number of converts may be smaller than it would be if contraception did not enter into the situation.

Moreover, the attitude of the Church on contraception may account for the loss of a good many born Catholics. Father Martindale, the well-known English Jesuit, writing several years ago in THE COMMONWEAL (February 22, 1928), said:

> I think that the frightful—I repeat, the frightful—burden rightly laid on the average Catholic citizen by way of Catholic doctrine concerning birth restriction, tends to break down the allegiance of thousands whose shoulders are not exceptionally strong. I know many who argue (illogically, but still . . .): "In this point I cannot—anyway I do not—observe Catholic rules. Had I not better therefore chuck the whole thing? Would I not be a hypocrite not to do so?"

Four conclusions seem to stand out from this treatment of "The Official Catholic Directory" figures:

First, these figures are about as reliable as any we have in regard to church membership. And the remarkable check through death rates would indicate quite a high degree of accuracy.

Secondly, the Catholic birth rate is 70 percent higher than the birth rate for the registration area; or, allowing for mixed marriages and the effect of the Catholic birth rate on the general birth rate, it is more than 91 percent higher. Consequently, it seems clear that Catholics are not practising contraception to the same extent as non-Catholics.

Thirdly, the excess of Catholic births over deaths is nearly three times that of the excess of births over deaths for the registration area; or, allowing for mixed marriages and the effect of the Catholic birth rate on the general birth rate, it is more than four and a half times the excess of births over deaths for the registration area.

Fourthly, the Catholic Church, although registering a very slight actual increase last year—only a fraction over one-tenth of 1 percent—must have lost in the neighborhood of 500,000 born Catholics.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

By JOHN K. RYAN

TWICE in his "Nicomachean Ethics" did Aristotle speak of the brave man who would willingly lay down his life for his country. Sixteen hundred years later his treatise on ethics was cherished and studied as never before, and by strange men in a strange, new world. So much did these men venerate Aristotle and so greatly did they value his works that he was called "The Philosopher"; but even so, the Philosopher's new followers and interpreters did not agree with everything he said. Strangely enough, they hesitated at his account of the good citizen, who would willingly lay down his life for the state. "De forti fit magna altercatio, an secundum rectam rationem debet se sic exponere morti" (concerning the hero there is a great dispute, whether it is according to right reason that he should thus expose himself to death), said John Duns Scotus, the Subtle Doctor. In other words, at the turn of the fourteenth century men could question the wisdom and virtue of dying for the fatherland, and long and bitter must have been their debate on the question. To us who live and think in the millenial days of nationalism, the very mention of such an argument comes as a surprise. It savors ever so slightly of heresy. It shocks one to think that there was a time when men did not accept "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori" as a self-evident principle. Still more disconcerting is it to find the problem solved on ethical and metaphysical grounds, rather than by a muddy and poisonous emotionalism or by veiled but vicious threats.

Six hundred years after the schoolmen held their debate, another argument was waged over the death of the hero in war. In 1918 more than one American, even as Englishmen before them, ardently debated this point: Does not the American soldier who dies from a German bullet or from German gas suffer a martyr's death? Many held that he did, and it further followed that the soldier of the Allies, the Sepoy who perished from the cold of northern France and even the black colonial who died of disease, laid down their lives for righteousness. The death of these possessed all the efficacy of the martyr's self-oblation. The words "holocaust," "sacrifice" and "martyrdom," used so frequently concerning the slaughtered millions, had thus a completely literal as well as a figurative sense. So thought the more ardent of these war-time debaters; cooler heads held that beautiful and brave as was the soldier's death, yet it could not be classed as martyrdom, that it alone was not enough for salvation. There is in this more considered judgment a partial rejection of the religion of nationalism; it gives evidence of a suspicion that this religion is not altogether to be relied upon, is not completely efficacious.

Between the two debates there is a vastly greater difference than that of time and space alone. Six centuries and 4,000 miles separate the schoolmen of Paris and the American exhorters; still more are they separated in religion, philosophy and politics. Even greater than the contrast of the two ages and the two groups of men is the contrast in the things with which they are concerned. For Duns Scotus and his pupils war still possessed a personal character: hand to hand combats were the rule; battle-ax, spear and sword were the weapons; fighting from a distance was done at best by bows and arrows and crude machines; in battle the opposing forces were always within sight of one another. Holding this personal character, war necessarily manifested to the observer something of its true nature and governing principles. It could be justified on no other ground than that of self-defense against an unjust aggressor. It was an extreme measure—*ultima ratio regum*—a recourse to violence as the only means left to repel or rectify a grossly evil deed. No mere appeal to national pride and prestige, no smarting vanity, no vague and debatable ideal could sanction it. Nothing less than a grave evil, real and present, could justify the use of a means so extreme, so fraught with danger and so burdened with disaster. Thus it was that war, like a personal quarrel, was always wrong on one side. As in a personal quarrel, too, both sides could be wrong, each driving at the other's life without a just or adequate cause, using evil means to accomplish an evil end. Possessing and manifesting this character, it is not unnatural that war, and especially an unjust war, should be a subject of debate. Nor is it surprising that some would protest at any insistence on the duty of laying down one's life when escape was possible or when the quarrel was unjust.

One hopes that all those schoolmen who debated the hero's death are numbered with Duns Scotus among the blest, and it is not without profit to speculate as to their present mind upon the controversy. Surely after watching the progress of events from 1914 to 1918, those who held that it was not according to right reason to lay down one's life for the common good are confirmed in their opinion, while their opponents are converted to it. They do not hold that heroism and self-sacrifice are no longer virtues, or that men and nations have lost their rights to life and lawful self-defense. Rather do they see these virtues as greater and these rights as more sacred than ever, because they are more endangered. From their high vantage point they can see (more clearly than even we, the brothers of the victims, can see) how frequent, how awful and how futile is the hero's death. They have watched wars beget wars, and know how true is the assertion that war never settles any problem. Century after century, they have seen brave men die in increasing numbers and by ever more horrible means, and all for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

naught. Surely they know the pity if not the bitterness of one who stands on Vimy Ridge or at Ypres amid the unending rows of white crosses. These mark the graves of men slain by their fellows when all the world was mad. Pierced, mangled, poisoned or suffocated, they died amid such moral and physical horror as was never known before. They were the latest victims of the malign and maniacal discipline whereby the modern state slays its best and chosen subjects. Folly, madness and sin there are in every soldier's sacrifice, but they come not from the victim of this awful discipline but from the blind and wanton ones in power.

There was an argument once in vogue which said that it was good for men to devise new instruments of destruction, more efficient machines and more powerful explosives: they would be a safeguard, an insurance against war, for no nation would dare to use them. Today new dealers of death are being contrived, more frightful explosives compounded, more horrible gases sought and found. Yet the old argument is never heard, nor will it ever be raised again. Its fallacy was exposed by bitter experience, and men no longer blind themselves to the fact that these weapons are designed for use. They know that in some sudden burst of madness the guns will be loaded, the explosives touched off, the gases loosed. Against whom? Against, say Mr. Arthur Henderson in England and General Berthold von Deimling in Germany, the great centers of civilian population. Those who wage war in the future must be prepared to throw off every pretense of morality. No longer will war possess its traditional character of armed conflict between opposing forces. Forces and arms there will be, but they are to be directed not so much at each other as at the non-combatants. In the past some recognition was granted to the sacredness of the rights of those who stay at home, of women and children, of the aged and infirm. Some concession was made to the demand of the natural law that even in war there was to be a right use of means. The conflict planned for the future is to be devoid of moral restraint. In contempt of morality and reason, it is projected as a sudden blow, unexpected, devastating, completely successful only if it annihilates the enemy nation.

The principles defining the relations of means and ends in the affairs of men are neither new nor entirely unfamiliar, but they lack the popular favor and acceptance granted to a remotely related axiom, *Exitus probat acta.* For the scientific mind of this generation it is the event which really proves the nature of the act, its worth or deficiencies. If this pragmatic test is ever valid or efficacious, it is in the present problem. With the futile havoc of the last war still fresh and working, it is difficult to think of the outcome of another and greater conflict in anything but terms of universal disaster. Waged with all the ferocity and blind fury of which men have proved themselves capable, could such a conflict end anywhere but in the destruction or maiming of untold lives, in the extinction of entire races, in the collapse of Western civilization? Yet in the face of such a doom there are those who take the appalling view that another war is inevitable and that its alignments are even now being formed. Before 1914, George Gissing was not alone in holding that reiterated prophecies of war were one way to ensure its coming. For the nations to prepare for another struggle as well as to indulge in prophecy is to pursue the same policy which brought on the last disaster. Evil as to purpose and means, futile in its event, involving attacker and attacked alike in its debacle, another world war would be even more devoid than the last of any human and rational character.

Because of all this it may be argued that to prepare for another war is to acquiesce in all that it involves, is to approve and coöperate, is to accept a share in its infinite guilt. To reason thus is not to imply acceptance of any sophistical theory of changing moral principles. Human nature and the body of rights and duties dependent on it have not changed, but the objective fact that we call war has changed, although the name remains the same. Substituted for war and masquerading under the old name is something new and different. To it we cannot apply the old norms of what is licit and what is illicit, for the reason that this new achievement of the scientific and military mind is something intrinsically evil. Evil and self-defeating, it is the utmost folly for any nation, and a fortiori for all nations, to prepare for it, and to guide their conduct by any such outworn maxims as those urging that times of peace be turned into preludes of war. The modern world has become powerless to control the forces that it creates. The means that nations have devised for their own protection and aggrandizement can do nothing but defeat their seeming purpose and destroy those who wield them. The rights to physical and spiritual integrity belong now as always to men and nations, but the way to safeguard them is by discarding force rather than by reliance on it.

To perceive both the real and the ideal at the same time is not a contradiction, and one may seek a disavowal of force without being so naive as to believe that it will ever be completely attained. Again, militarism's latest threats do not deprive a nation of its right to life any more than the gunman's threats deprive the private citizen of his right to self-defense. Conversly, to be threatened with murder does not give one the right to commit murder. It should be possible for a civilized government to protect its subjects from bacillus bombs and gas attacks without resorting to reprisals in kind. Still, the prudence that leads a nation to protect itself against attacks of this kind need not sink into a passive acceptance of them as inevitable. To expose and prevent such dangers is a sounder and safer procedure than a policy of indifference and inaction. Nor is that self-deception at which all peoples are adept, and none more than ourselves, to be left unchecked. There is a natural tendency to make the end justify the means, and diplomatic casuistry has always found it easy to prove that a war is purely defensive.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A great but almost forgotten English thinker once wondered if nations, like individuals, could not go mad, and if Bishop Butler had lived two hundred years later, his pessimism would no doubt have increased. To read a chronicle of what men said and did during the war years is to gain the impression that the human mind was working in a fever and hysteria which were all the more deadly in that they produced the delusion of something more than sanity, the conviction of engaging in a crusade of the purest and most exalted idealism. Far greater cause for pessimism lies in the fact that even the lesson of those years has not been fully learned, and that such madness could again seize men's minds. The question debated by Duns Scotus and his confrères needs to be revived and restated: Is it according to right reason for governments in any way to plan the death of their own subjects or those of any other nation? It is no longer a question of waging war, or of brave men laying down their lives for their country in the old sense. Bad as it was, war is a thing of the past. The present need is that the murderous onslaughts that are planned in its stead be recognized in their true character, proclaimed and proscribed as acts insane and diabolic, leading only to destruction.

In view of the racial and religious antecedents of the dominating class in American life, it is not surprising that all our wars should have been nothing short of crusades for some altruistic and highly moral ideal. The keynotes to the Puritan character, as André Siegfried has pointed out, are self-righteousness and self-complacency, together with a determination to raise others to its own high level. That there are stores of strength and virtue in this character cannot be denied, and it is not impossible that they be directed to better ends. To arouse the world to a realization of the malice of the latest threats of militarism, to keep political power from those who would work iniquity, to lead the way, sincerely and actually, in disarmament, to coöperate, disinterestedly and effectively, with others working to the same ends, such efforts would be an earnest of a clear mind and heart. By them alone is there hope of saving what we still possess.

THESE NEUROTIC HEROINES

By KATHERINE BRÉGY

IF CONTEMPORARY woman goes down into history as incorrigibly, although sometimes very challengingly, neurotic, at least part of the blame must be shouldered by contemporary fiction. For to follow a little intensive course in recent literature of the ladies—merely a glance through the novels and plays and poems, the "decorative" biography and highly indiscreet autobiography of the moment, is enough to make any feminine person feel like frantically quoting Henry Arthur Jones's title, "We Can't Be As Bad As All That!" Although evidently, between the records of the psychiatrists and the tabloid newspapers, we are quite bad enough.

Yet ever since Eden this world would seem to have been a troubled and nerve-racking place. There are myriads of broken hearts and frustrated lives all through history and consequently all through literature: plenty of sin and plenty of sanctity, plenty of health and plenty of disease, both mental and physical. It is a temptation to think of the peculiar blending of health and disease, even sometimes of sanctity and sin, which we call neuroticism as a distinctly modern development. But what with Nero now being described as a "sadist" and Cleopatra—like the owner of the Green Hat!—as a "nymphomaniac," and all our semi-scientific jargon about the "Oedipus complex," it looks as though the phenomena of morbidity were old enough and only our intense interest in them so very new.

Shakespeare, whose women almost invariably shoot straighter and higher than his men, gave us a mad Ophelia and a Kate subject to brain-storms—or were they just some sort of inhibitions, or the lack of inhibitions? But Shakespeare did not choose these women for his heroines, although he did choose Hamlet for his hero. And Hamlet is a man after the professional psychologist's own heart: perhaps the first absolutely fascinating neurotic in literature, so modern in his discord of idea and action, of wish and will, that he seems far nearer to us than to the exuberant Elizabethans. Although, if we may believe Mr. Lytton Strachey, Elizabeth herself was not free from neuroses! And Hamlet's Spanish contemporary, Don Quixote, stamped his own name for all time upon a certain kind of idealistic wool-gathering and windmill-fighting.

It is curious how little immediate influence upon literature Shakespeare's subtle and stupendous study seems to have had. Hamlet would have been as foreign to the smart sophistication of English Restoration comedy as to the classic tragedy of Racine and Corneille across the Channel. In fact, he had scarcely one blood brother until Ibsen made his stage into a dissecting-table for the souls of men and women. Yes—it remained for the Norwegian pessimist to weave from abnormal psychology the very warp and woof of his drama. But Ibsen did not invent the neurotic; he merely interpreted him—or her. And it is rather interesting to remember that Marie Bashkirtseff's brief life (1860-1884) fell entirely within the years of Ibsen's dramatic activity, for her celebrated journal was an early revelation of the highly gifted, highly neurotic young woman immensely interested in herself and able to interest other people also. But what would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marie, "weary of obscurity—consumed by inaction," praying God that she may deceive herself to escape the nightmare suspicion of her own "mediocrity," think of the crude and candid vagaries of her sisters today?

What, one wonders, would she think of the Nina of "Strange Interlude"? Here we have Eugene O'Neill's attempt, through dramatizing both the conscious and subconscious mind, to flood with the white light of truth some thirty years of a woman's life. To be sure, the light is not very white, after all, since Mr. O'Neill and the characters in his drama spend most of their time groping through a tragic fog of hysterical and contradictory passions. But at least, the poisoning of Nina's emotional nature at its very roots, by the lover lost to her through war and her father's interference, is credible enough, since there are undoubtedly blows upon the heart which scar brain and soul also. The girl's amorous adventures up to the time of her marriage with Sam are also credible, although rather vulgar and rather ugly. Still uglier and far less credible is the scene in which Nina, learning of her husband's hereditary mental taint, is persuaded by his sinister and obviously tainted mother to destroy her unborn child and seek another father for the son she believes will later mean everything to her. As a matter of fact he does not mean so very much, and in the end the woman loses him, too, because she will not sacrifice her own happiness for his.

It is really of herself Nina thinks all the time: first of her heart and then of her senses, next of her pride and, finally, with whitening hair and a new platonic husband—"good old Charlie," who is willing to dismiss the past as a strange interlude in which their souls "have been scraped clean of impure flesh"—of peace. But always, always of her own *nerves*. . . . And after five hours of these disturbed and disturbing revelations, we are left wondering with poor Paula Tanqueray, the neurotic heroine of a more conservative generation, whether Nina's future will not be "just the past entered by another gate."

"Strange Interlude" was immensely interesting as a dramatic experiment, and piercing its hours of dreary ugliness were little moments of illumination which convinced many of us that Eugene O'Neill was far more important as a poet than as a philosopher. But is there any use denying that the play is the very apotheosis of morbidity—the crest of the wave of neuroticism which has swept during the past few years across contemporary literature, and indeed all contemporary art?

Now neuroticism, like a good many lovelier things, is easier to recognize than to define. The dictionary which coldly sums it up as "an aberration from normal mental processes," a condition in which "acts are prompted by passion rather than reason," does not greatly help. For it is to be feared that few human beings are governed by calm reasoning, while genius is technically as much of an "aberration" as inferiority or eccentricity. Those who have studied neuroticism at close range know that it is not merely the nervous tension and restlessness which are almost inevitable parts of our tense and restless age, nor yet the highly sensitized imagination which makes people both happier and unhappier than their fellows, and—consequently perhaps?—builds up the arts of the world. It is these qualities carried to such excess that their victims are no longer able to face or to cope with life. They are always torturing themselves or others. There is a sense of confusion, of frustration, of "shell shock," which often is merely a temporary reaction; but which in the confirmed neurotic resolves itself sometimes into fears and fantasies, sometimes into the obsession or the *idée fixe*—and if pushed too far, into insanity.

Tennyson suggested the thing in his "Supposed Confessions of a Second-rate Sensitive Mind Not in Unity with Itself," and the phosphorescent gleam lights many a page of recent prose and poetry. Sometimes it is the new obsession of ugliness, as in George Viereck's reference to the "white ulcer" of the snow, the "green leprosy" of spring. Again it is the old, old hunger to escape from life as we know it, which Amy Lowell has summed up with a fine feminine candor in her "Japanese Fantasia." Sitting by her open window, the woman conjures up wistful visionary venturings in the realms of faith, of love, of beauty. Then comes the aching climax of her boredom:

> I would anything
> Rather than this cold paper;
> With outside, the quiet sun on the sides of burgeoning branches,
> And inside, only my books . . .

Most neuroticism is supposed to be brought about by inhibitions or repressions—particularly the inhibitions of an unfulfilled love-life. And no doubt these have been responsible for a good deal, both in and out of fiction. . . . But François Mauriac's much-praised novel "Thérèse," varied the somewhat overworked theme by showing a woman distraught by family tyranny, by ennui, pushed almost insensibly toward a crime she immediately repented—the attempted murder of the husband she despised but did not really hate. And Julian Green, that phenomenally successful young Franco-American novelist, chose a somewhat similar background for his "Walled Garden" but with a heroine innately morbid from the very start. Between the needless and incredible monotony of the girl's daily life, her passion for the hard-working village doctor she scarcely knows, and her hatred for the father she knows too well and pushes half-involuntarily downstairs to his death (these neurotic crimes are never, of course, quite fully willed!), it is only a matter of time before she will be found gibbering upon the road and taken off to the madhouse. And in Mr. Green's more recent prize novel, "The Dark Journey," we have homicidal mania again, and a thoroughgoing neuroticism which extends to the men as well as to the women!

"I dress in black to match my life. I am unhappy," cried the Masha of Chekhov's "Sea Gull"; and we used

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to comfort ourselves by citing such passages as examples of Russian morbidity. But today, every other heroine of Main Street wears mourning for the selfsame reason—unless she happens to belong to the less subtle and more cheerful brand of the Scarlet Sister Marys! And apparently the one thing worse than having too many inhibitions is having too few. . . . It is not only worse for civilization and all the sweet amenities of life, it is even worse for the individual's nerves. At least, so one infers from the hectic fiction of our "flaming youth"—now fortunately on the wane—and from such recent revelations as Theodore Dreiser's "Gallery of Women." Here are no "suppressed desires."

But what do the portraits of this professed realist and modernist show us? First a morphine-crazed supervising nurse who, wrecked by unhappy sex experiences—need one say that it is some phase of love or marriage or sex which wrecks all these women?—sinks into theft and general moral chaos. Over against her may be set the young American artist, similarly wrecked and left at last drifting aimlessly in a sea of disenchantment and futility; or the bored wife of a rich husband, who goes in for Greenwich Village and "varietism"—which frailty (it used to be called just promiscuity!) covers a multitude of sins in Mr. Dreiser's pages. And in due time we meet Giff, the half-crazed soothsayer; Ernita, who espouses Communism and free love because, as the author charitably suggests, she "needed rest and change" with "a little affectionate stability"; and finally, the motion-picture star who ends her melodramatic career by gas because she is persuaded that the years from sixteen to twenty-eight are the best of a woman's life, and after these come, "more than likely, the doldrums." There is, in the words of the blunt old proverb, "poor choice of rotten apples"; but if it were a question of singling out from the gloomy gallery one woman with a spark of courage before life, there would remain only the charwoman, Bridget Mullanphy, with her "hearty, defiant Irishness," and the bitterness and charity of overcrowded tenements in her heart and on her tongue.

Still darker pages of contemporary fiction include: the melancholy perversions of Proust and D. H. Lawrence and the cryptic Joyce, of the earlier Sherwood Anderson and the later John Cowper Powys; the tragic perversions which make a nightmare of Robinson Jeffers's powerful poetry; the sudden vogue in novel and play of the incest theme, avoided and abhorred even in the pagan literature of antiquity. No doubt these things have their place as studies in abnormal psychology; no doubt they are part of the mysterious "terror and pity" of life and of literature. But it is so easy to go over the frontiers of morbidity—and once over, the perspective for literature and life, too, is lost. For whenever we focus too closely on the personal, the exceptional, we lose touch with the universal. And one of Bernard Shaw's inimitable prefaces tells the tragedy of a young artist forced to make sketches of cancer for a medical volume until he became so obsessed that every object he attempted to paint looked like a cancer!

Happy people, it goes without saying, are not neurotic—and happy women, it has been cynically observed, have no history. But life being what it is, few women or men either can ever have been really happy except for short and sunny intervals. Not happy, perhaps: yet in all the healthy periods of history the mass of people have achieved a certain working content, a certain working courage, while great minds have flowered into creative art and great souls into joy and sanctity. The disease of neuroticism seems to break out when existence becomes unbearable not so much physically as mentally. It comes, apparently when people's inner and outer standards are at variance—at the end of a war, perhaps, at the end of a civilization—particularly when they have lost their hold upon faith and are losing their hold upon other ideals. Significantly enough, not one of the women cited in this paper seems to have had any religion worth mentioning. Mr. O'Neill's Nina rails at God the Father because her own father has failed her, while Mr. Galsworthy's "Fugitive" cries: "I'm too fine and not fine enough . . . I couldn't be a saint and martyr, and I wouldn't be a soulless doll. Neither one thing nor the other—that's the tragedy."

Something of the kind is indeed the tragedy of all the distraught women who have become so frightfully familiar in our fiction—and alas! sometimes out of it. But the real danger of the neurotic heroine is that she shall be taken for granted; that familiarity may breed not contempt, nor even charity, but just a casual comradeship. For the popular type never stays inside of a book or a play. It immediately externates itself, as Lord Fauntleroy was externated in velvet suit and lace collar for the torment of a whole generation. And mental disease is more of a menace than the impeccable Fauntleroy or the unquenchable Pollyanna—because it happens to be quite as contagious as physical disease.

Sacrament

Elder flower, elder flower,
White as is the broken bread,
Your whiteness brings again the hour
When love so softly said:

"This is my body offered you,
I give it freely, take and eat.
Like manna, daily it is new,
And it is more than wheat."

Elder flower, elder flower,
Red your berries bubble up,
And bring again that crimson hour
When love proffered the cup:

"This is my blood so freely shed,
Take, and drink, I gladly give.
For only by such wine and bread
The starved soul may live!"

JOHN RICHARD MORELAND.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WAR GUILT AND REVISION

By ERNEST DIMNET

FATHER M. M. HOFFMAN'S article in THE COMMONWEAL of April 29 deserves to be answered in a similar article and not in a letter which some readers might overlook. Living, as I do, 3,000 miles away from New York, I can only apologize for the inevitable delay with which these few remarks must appear.

What I said in my article of seven or eight weeks ago, to which Father Hoffman refers, can be summed up as follows:

Some people seem to envisage the possibility of another European war with indifference; this attitude is criminal; the next war will not be a mere scrap between France and Germany; it will once more involve the whole of Europe and very likely America; in case of a German victory, the presence of Germany's ally, Soviet Russia, in the coalition, may entail formidable social consequences, all of which is a hideous possibility. My conclusion was: Let war be avoided at all costs; if the Versailles Treaty has to be amended, let it be amended by peaceful methods. The one I suggested was at hand, viz., appeal to the League of Nations under Article XIX, but if anybody had another plan to suggest, I hoped he would help in averting another catastrophe by making that plan public.

Two letters were sent to THE COMMONWEAL by Father Blomenstein and by Father Scarpner; they did not suggest any plan. Now comes Father Hoffman's article. Its real conclusion is on page 709, and runs as follows:

> Every one of us hopes that a solution of the present unfortunate situation will be found far short of recourse to another war. The most important factor in this solution will be the revision of the Versailles Treaty under Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the first step in this revision must be, of course, the deletion of Article 231 [on war guilt].

"Under Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations." So Father Hoffman and I agree on the vital point. But Father Hoffman's article raises a number of issues (security, disarmament, the Polish question, the question of knowing whether the Polish upper classes are moral or not, the question of knowing whether, as I think, Russia is an entirely different country from what it used to be, or, as Father Hoffman thinks, is the same as it was when "it fought on the side of France during the World War"), all of which would require lengthy treatment which cannot be dreamed of in this article. These side-issues only obscure the real one which was and remains: How is war to be avoided?

Father Hoffman is apparently convinced that the first step the League of Nations should take must be to delete Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty saddling the responsibility of the war on the Central Empires. The greatest mistake made at Versailles by the victorious nations lay, he also thinks, in the absence of some such declaration as the following: This war has been nobody's or has been everybody's fault. We were all to blame, and the responsibilities for the blame cannot be apportioned; consequently, nobody should be accountable for the appalling destruction visible sixty miles from where we are; President Wilson's Fourteen Points misguided America first, then the whole world; let us all go home and to work; let us forget these four horrible years and act as if nothing had happened; in time these ruins will disappear.

If this is what friends and foes should have said, let me ask Father Hoffman if, in 1918—when he may have been near Rheims or Verdun—he himself ever thought of any such declaration as possible or right? Did he remember any such condonement following a war in the past? Did anybody suggest such a declaration? Yet, the Central Empires did not wait till 1918 to fill the world with what they called the proofs of their innocence. America especially had been heavily propagandized. If the non-guilt of the Central Empires had been so evident, America might have been convinced. She then would have forced her conviction on Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and the other Allied nations.

Why always talk as if vindictive France and crushed Germany were face to face at Versailles and during the Paris negotiations, so that France had her own way? It may be convenient for polemical purposes, but it is unfair, to speak or act as if a powerful array of other nations were not there. Not one voice was heard against Article 231.

Father Hoffman may say: No, all this was not clear in 1918-1919, but it is clear now. Germany was not so guilty as people thought. If it was not clear in 1919, no blame should be attached to the treaty for remembering how barbarously Austria in 1914 treated Serbia; how the German government (this does not mean the emperor) abetted her ally, and what formidable consequences followed. On the other hand, if it is as clear now as Father Hoffman says, why do not the governments of countries where the conviction of the non-guilt of the Central Empires prevails, make amends at once to the said empires? Signor Mussolini, for instance—Father Hoffman quotes from his message to the German people—might take the initiative. What do we hear? Not a word. Only vague allusions to a revision of the treaty which might give to Italy more than she got by it. Is not Mr. Borah—also quoted by Father Hoffman—strong enough in the Senate to force from it a declaration of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the non-guilt of the Central Empires? Has the Holy Father spoken? . . . .

It is obvious that if France and possibly Belgium, possibly also the nations of the Petite Entente, were reluctant to make up their minds to an apology to Germany, they could be isolated by the rest of the world making that apology. No signs of any such movement. Only individuals every now and then speak, and, too often, it is visible that their sympathies are more active than their critical faculties. Too often, also, those who approve of their views do so racially or sentimentally. Father Hoffman does not seem to have read any of the many opponents of Professors Fay or Barnes. He does not seem to know von Bülow's memoirs. He may not have noticed that Mr. Fay uses only German and Russian sources. I have no doubt that he finds Mr. Barnes's historical methods faulty when they deal with Christianity. Why do they become excellent when the professor deals with war-guilt?

Governments are silent on this question because certainty about it is not what Father Hoffman thinks. As a matter of fact, such issues are always decided, and very slowly, by history. In 1870 France declared war against Germany, was beaten and paid a heavy penalty. Few voices were heard in protest. Before the end of the nineteenth century the memoirs of Busch, Bismarck's secretary, make it clear that the person really responsible for the war was Bismarck. A telegram from Ems referred to a conversation of the King of Prussia with the French ambassador. That conversation had been friendly. But cutting out a vital passage in the telegram, Bismarck made it sound insulting to France. In that way he was sure of his war, and at the minute he wanted it. He and his associates, Moltke and Von Roon, chuckled. All this became known long ago. No war responsibility ever was more evident. Yet who ever said that Germany had no right to the fruits of that unjust war? History spoke, but nobody else did.

A declaration of the innocence of the Central Empires would not be enough. Father Hoffman, quoting Father Coughlin, shows

> . . . the connection of the sole war-guilt theory and the Young Plan of reparations. If Germany were not solely responsible, why pin the severe strictures of the Versailles Treaty upon her?

Quite. So Father Hoffman thinks that France and Belgium had no right to any reparations! Does he realize that here at least he, in his own words, "out-Germans the Germans," since Count Brockdorff-Rantzau said at Paris, that Germany was willing to pay 100,000,000,000 marks, and a great many Germans very nobly still go on saying that reparations should be paid? Does he know that every cent paid by Germany to France goes to France's payments to America? Belgium and Poland certainly were not responsible for the war: should they too defray their own reparations, because "although no intelligent person denies Germany's war-guilt," millions of intelligent persons deny her sole guilt? Is the Young Plan—which is not a French but an American arrangement—so unjust?

What applies to money should no doubt apply to territories or property. Should Britain return Germany's colonies and indemnify her for the destruction of her fleet at Scapa Flow? How much so-called German territory should be demanded from Poland? From Czechoslovakia? More interesting than all the rest is the question of what adjustments should be made with Italy. Italy, moved by that desire for security so often blamed in the French (but not in the British whose security cannot brook the idea of a twenty-feet-long frontier—the Channel Tunnel), has pushed her northern frontier up to the Brenner. That means the annexation of 1,000,000 Germans who do not seem particularly happy. What of them? . . . .

All these questions have to be considered, and I hope Father Hoffman is ready with his answers to them. He visibly deals with the situation in a Christian spirit. But he is too inclined to imagine that the same spirit prevails where mere political considerations are paramount. Statesmen, even in Germany, think less of moral theology than of diplomacy and maneuvers. We, over here, who are not separated from the realities by thirteen years and by an ocean, know what can be expected. The League of Nations may suspend the Young Plan for a few years; more loans may be accorded to Germany and Austria; local readjustments may be made here and there, in Hungary, or Silesia, for instance; some African mandate may, and I hope will, be given back to Germany; there are reasons to hope that all this will be done in a growing spirit of peace, for peaceful Germans and peaceful Frenchmen meet all the time, and Paris is full of German tourists. More than that can hardly be expected. Let anything threaten the territorial status quo in the resurrected nations, Poland and Bohemia, and war must be the consequence. Even the Anschluss would be dangerous for the frail equilibrium of Central Europe, and I was glad to see that THE COMMONWEAL so resolutely took sides against it. These are the realities.

Southern Floodlands

Garlic and marshgrass fester in the meadow
By the chameleon river which the rains,
Urged by the thunder's black and ribald shadow,
Swept to a russet flood. These fertile plains
Have felt no sting of harrow nor of plow;
Now sullen ragwort in the topaz loam
Usurps the furrow of the corn. And now
Wild mustard builds its arrogant gold home.

The sun again is kind, the skies are blue.
But in the lowlands only ruin springs—
Only the water's flotsam residue
Of weeds and twigs and planks. No Negro sings
Earth's lullaby for possum and for cotton.
The song is quenched. The singer sleeps, forgotten.

ERNEST HARTSOCK.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE END OF AN AGE

By JAMES W. LANE

WE ARE beginning to realize that those philosophers who set the limit of a culture period at twenty years were not far from wrong. In fact, all through the nineteenth century this theory held good. But it is only during the last generation, what with the suddenness with which modernism sprang upon us and what with the writings of Spengler and others, that people have become period-conscious. And now that our own age is going to change, we shall be in the curious position of *consciously* witnessing its metamorphosis.

The jazz age came into being about ten or fifteen years ago. The Brown Brothers were giving their dizzy performances on the saxaphone, and New York was growing steadily dance-crazy. Then was the inception of the night-club mania, and while at first this was limited to the rich and the exclusive, it soon spread to all classes as the popularization of everything became popular.

Concomitant with liberalism of manners and morals went liberalism of mind, and we had much-discussed articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *Unpoular Review* about "these wild young people." As people grew interested in liberation, they turned to sex, bolstered with the backing of Freud and Ellis, Huxley and Firbank. Literature on sex, from being innocuous, reached the depths of noxiousness. Indeed half of the serious literature and fiction combined had a definite sex-appeal, at least for the sex-minded. Then came the radio. It put the popularization of "modernism"—of high-powered salesmanship, of stampeded personalities, of tooth-pastes, cigars, wrist-watches and other articles of domestic efficiency and smartness—in the same class as the selling of thousands of copies of books. Thus while we became sex-minded we also became money-minded. We had our prosperity, our big fling at self-indulgence. Now those who are exhausted as a result, want to say good-by to all that.

There are signs that the old world herself, who is nothing if not wise, is going to humor them. *Tout casse, tout passe, tout lasse.* Democratization of the mind and slavery of the body to liberation create their own opposites. Yearning for comparative solitude, mental and physical, respect for the intellect, for religious reality and even mysticism, and a brighter sense of honor come to be regarded as desiderata.

Among the first things of the jazz age to go are women's fashions. A press dispatch from Paris the other week proclaimed the doom of what Marcel Prévost has called *la garçonnification de la fille.* Sunburn and tan cream will disappear from the faces. Girls of the new age are to be ladylike, at any rate, for fashion's sake, pale and languid-looking. Hardness of facial contour and of personal manner will presumably go out.

But there are many other less superficial signs than women's styles, which sometimes have the habit of changing without changing the person and which change more often than anything else within a culture period.

What is vastly more consequential, in sounding the knell of the last ten years, is changes in the mind. The mind lately has been in a vacuum, with all its prerogatives delegated to the body and immediacy of sensation. The literary movement of humanism has recently made an attempt to combat this and to bring back disinterestedness and principle. But humanism is not sufficiently deeply grounded. It leaves out the religious side of man's nature. It would not countenance the philosophy of, because it does not understand the philosophy of, the Catholic Church. Yet no other church puts such a premium on self-control and gentlemanly feeling, the two qualities upon which humanism prides herself the most.

The movement toward order in literature is not confined to the humanists. Jacques Maritain in France, a neo-Catholic philosopher, and T. S. Eliot in England, an Anglo-Catholic critic and poet, have severally a group of young writers eddying about them. Virginia Sackville-West in "The Edwardians," Priestly in "Angel Pavement," Herbert in "The Water Gypsies," Thornton Wilder in "The Woman of Andros," all express a love for more settled and dependable things. Each of these works proved a wide success. The dealer in muck, on the contrary, finds no longer so large an audience.

But what is going to happen next? I confess that I am somewhat at a loss to know. Chaos is still around us, we may have another war, and Communism may enlarge its dominions, spreading the fever of irreligion everywhere. One thing I am sure of, though: we are all far less jazzy. The effects of the depression may continue that influence indefinitely. The only correct answer in determining the characteristics of the next period needs a conspectus much larger than mine.

TWO WEST INDIANS

By VINCENT ENGELS

THIS is the portrait of two men I know. I have not known them very long, but they have told me the names of their heroes, and so I think I know them very well. At least I understand that the difference between them is not so easily to be measured as that blue Mona Passage which separates their merely physical presences.

One is a Haitian, now living in Santo Domingo City, where so many unpopular citizens of Haiti have opportunely (a jump or two ahead of the machetes) sought refuge. In his person is represented a threat to whatever peace and freedom Haiti may now possess. And since it is a threat involving a philosophy repugnant not only to the Haitians, but to many eminent men here and there throughout the world, it ought to receive a general publicity.

The exile is a quiet-spoken man of middle age, whose skin is as black as the ambition he carries in his heart. He is an accomplished man. He can tend bar and he can speak English, two abilities which throughout this part of the world rarely conjoin in any except true born Jamaicans. But you would never mistake my friend for a Jamaican. The English of the man from Kingston can only be described as the combination of an Elizabethan idiom with a Negroid accent and a dash of shorthand. While the bartender of Santo Domingo says simply "How do," or "What'll you have, brother?" His English obviously derives from the purest of American sources.

And if you speak to him some late afternoon or evening when the damp musty odors of the barroom have contrived to make him melancholy, and the virtue of his own rum to make him eloquent, you will discover that his teachers were the United States Marines. For them he preserves an admiration and a faith which cannot be questioned, and which ought to be respected, for there—probably—in his devotion to the Marines, is the whole of his religion.

He will tell you that he was once a member of the Garde d'Haiti, that strange company of native Haitians and American Marines which guarantees peace, order and honesty in the Black Republic. Adopting as his own, with the passionate intensity of which the Africo-Latin is always capable, the prejudices and eccentricities of his white officers, he learned to despise the mass of his fellow Haitians, and to believe that work

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and discipline were the only possible means of their salvation. Now, amid his casks and bottles, he thinks of the day only five years distant when the Americans will withdraw from Haiti, and it appears to him that on the day after that, a fine opportunity will be knocking at the gate of the one right man.

"What Haiti will need then," he says, "is another Christophe."

Perhaps that statement calls for an explanation. Christophe was King of Haiti about one hundred years ago. He was a hard, ambitious man. His plan was to make Haiti industrious, productive, rich, a power among nations. And so he commanded that all men should work from daylight until dark. Things went ill with anyone who slept beneath his coffee trees during the heat of the day.

It was as bad as slavery. Yet these people had risen against the French, their first masters, for one reason and another which you may call love of liberty or desire for vengeance, if you wish—neither of which had so much to do with the rebellion as a sublime disinclination to labor. And so in turn they rose against Christophe; his own army, sensing a much needed holiday, joined with them, and Christophe shot himself with a silver bullet. Since then it has been no crime in Haiti to be idle.

That was a hundred years ago, but the Haitians have neither forgotten nor forgiven. Although Christophe had been one of the great leaders in their War of Independence, to this day there is no statue of him in the great public square at Port au Prince. There is a statue of Dessalines, and there is one of Toussaint L'Overture, but there is none of Christophe, the man who made the Haitians work.

Now you will understand how daring, how radical, is the statement of the refugee gendarme who was trained by the United States Marines: "When the Americans leave, Haiti will need a Christophe."

He goes further. He says, after another glass of rum, with just the trace of an apologetic smile, "I could be that Christophe."

It is easy to laugh at such a man, although his ambition is less wildly fantastic than that which Toussaint was harboring as he went about a slave's chores years before his chance arrived, or than Christophe himself developed as he shined the boots of Frenchmen in the crossroads inn.

Our black plotter is only a refugee, an ex-member of the gendarmerie, not in good repute. But conceivably he or a similarly humble exile might one day be sitting in the palace at Port au Prince, and conceivably, with the help of the constabulary which the United States has been training, he might put his fellowmen to work.

The other man I have in mind does not know the name of Christophe. He is the janitor of the cathedral at San Juan, Porto Rico, and the name of his hero is William Jones. If you have never heard of the good Archbishop Monsignor William Jones, then you have not—certainly the little janitor believes you have not—heard of much, heard of anything at all. Christopher Columbus and Ponce de Leon and Monsignor Jones—these are great men, as the janitor knows, and as he would have the world acknowledge.

I met him one noon when the church was deserted except for ourselves; when the high sunlight flowed through the windows, and the noises of the city came to us dimly, filtered through dank ponderous walls of stone.

He was about a proper business, sweeping—sweeping before the Lord. And I was standing before the tomb of that Ponce de Leon who was for so long an humble captain in the armies of Spain, who at last through the power and industry of his sword came to the governorship of what is now Porto Rico and the ownership of a thousand slaves, but who then, harkening to an old woman's tale about a Fountain of Youth, poured out all the riches which he had so laboriously acquired, and which he now felt himself too old to enjoy, in the quest of that beautiful mirage, and who ended with an arrow in his liver.

I stood before the tomb of that celebrated man, and the little janitor stopped his sweeping to address me. What he said was punctuated frequenly with the name of "Gul-mo Joan-ess," which puzzled me until I realized that he was telling me about Guglielmo Jones. He was also denouncing the far-off city of Havana, which he accused of pretending to the guardianship of the last remains of Ponce de Leon. It was plain that the bones of the explorer could not be in two places at the same time. And, he asked in his curious salad of languages, had not Ponce de Leon been president of Porto Rico?

He was willing to declare that once, long ago, the body of Ponce had been entombed at Havana. But the archbishop had been determined that it should rest in Porto Rico, where it belonged, so he had sailed to Havana, returning at length with the coffin of the conquistador. Then after it had been placed in the church at San Juan, the people of Havana had raised a cry, asserting that what the archbishop had obtained was the body of some obscure navigator of galleons, and not the body of Ponce de Leon at all. Once more Gul-mo Joan-ess had bent himself to the problem.

And now gradually the image which the little janitor had formed of the great monsignor revealed itself. In his imagination he must have seen Archbishop Jones attired in the majestic robes of his office, seated on a dais, and there reading, reading, reading, in the vast books which surpliced acolytes brought and held before him, the evidence which was to name, brand and damn as a lie, and as a lie be written across the horizon of the Caribbean world, and sulphurously to excommunicate from the repository of true knowledge, the malicious assertions of Havana.

I know it is not an accurate picture of Monsenor Guglielmo Jones as I know that the story falls sadly from the truth. But I think it is a worthy story for all that—probably the archbishop would agree—worthy as a revelation of the world which the janitor had created for the satisfaction of his soul.

He followed me when I left the church, and we stood in the portal, looking out at the life of the street which for a moment seemed caught up and suspended, in the attitudes but without the reality of motion, as in a picture, or a frieze. On the steps sat an old beggar woman, her hand already stretched toward me; at the curb stood a dozen curious children, some of them as naked as were all the Boriquenos when first Ponce arrived here from Santo Domingo; across the street bougainvillea tumbled in a green and crimson cataract from a high garden wall, and among the vines a blackbird stood, half poised for flight.

Then from around the corner came the music of a beggar boys' orchestra—clarinets and drums and rattling gourds—at the sound of which the children in the street set up a jig; and then scattering them came automobiles, looking in this narrow street as imperious and huge as some raja's elegant blue elephants, whereas on Park Avenue or the Champs Elysée or many another broad boulevard in many another fashionable quarter of the world, they would have been shabby and mean indeed.

The janitor and I parted as old friends: he to go back to his sweeping, back also to his meditations, back to his inner life, and in that society, I am sure, he neither swept floors nor dusted marble tombs, but wore white breeches and silk stockings, and carried a shining silver sword in the service of Guglielmo Jones.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Precedent

ONCE more the old Provincetown Theatre has proved that vitality often finds its richest source in humble beginnings. "Precedent," the play by I. J. Golden, based on the Mooney trial, has now moved to an uptown theatre, but like so many other plays of importance in the American theatre, it was first produced in a very modest way in the narrow confines of the little MacDougal Street theatre, where the shades of O'Neill and Paul Green and many another dramatist fill the air.

It is said that Mr. Golden makes no pretense of being a professional playwright, that he is an attorney, and that he wrote this particular play as deliberate propaganda, spurred on by what have seemed to so many the flagrant injustices surrounding the trial, conviction and imprisonment of Mooney. At all events, he shows conclusively that when propaganda springs from an honest and hot fury, it may be cast into play form without any of the dreary stupidity that gushes from purely brain-manufactured theses. "Precedent" is one of the most deeply moving plays of the season, far less sensational in its trappings than "Five Star Final," and splendidly restrained even when its words fall like darting flames.

Bernard Shaw is the obvious example of the theoretical propagandist, whose plays frequently sag through the sheer bulk of the straw men he sets out to demolish. His prototype and master, Ibsen, was usually guilty of the same crime against the human integrity of drama, but as Ibsen was a far better technical playwright than Shaw, the ordinary elements of suspense and action are usually better proportioned than in Shaw's dramatic essays. There is, of course, something a trifle archaic in "Precedent," in that the political tie-ups it describes are the bogeys of a dozen years ago, when political rings were supposed to be run by the traction and other public utility interests. The advent of prohibition and of gangster government has changed the emphasis and setting considerably, with beer and bootleggers supplanting traction magnates in the popular understanding of city affairs.

But in a play about the Mooney case, with Mooney himself still in prison, and with the whole country familiar with the background and actuality of the tragedy, the antique political setting really does not count against the deep human aspects of the play. It is painfully obvious that Mooney was the victim of perjured testimony, that the trial judge himself has branded the whole affair as outrageous, and that every living member of the jury except one has recommended pardon. Under such circumstances, the particular nature and source of the conspiracy to convict him is of far less importance than the evidence that some such conspiracy did take place, and that it has succeeded in keeping a man generally considered innocent in jail for fifteen years under a commuted death sentence.

In fact, the propaganda aspects of the play are not concerned very largely with eradicating the forces which convicted Mooney. Similar and far worse conditions are to be found in any large city today, and any effective propaganda against them would have to be up to the minute in scope and material to carry any weight. Mr. Golden's restrained fury is directed against legalistic tangles which keep Mooney where he is—against continued injustice far more than against the original miscarriage of justice. This obviously makes the play one which cannot claim universal scope, nor those major qualities which endure beyond specific conditions. If Mooney were to be freed tomorrow, the play would lose most of its intensity and become merely an historical record. It is one of the few plays which can exist and capture the emotional response of an audience by the very fact that it has no ending, that it brings you up to the present and leaves you with a tragic question mark. I am not sure whether it comes technically within the scope of next year's Pulitzer award, but if it does, and if the committee fails to give it very serious consideration, then there will be a miscarriage of dramatic justice to add to the tag ends of the Mooney affairs.

I do not understand very well many of the critical comments which imply that the play lives chiefly through its intense sincerity, and that it cannot lay claim to being solidly good playwriting. It seems to me that in its closely cut episodic treatment, in all that it leaves unsaid, in its economy of emotion, in its careful selection of important incident, and in its maintenance of suspense, it is quite as expert as any other play now being acted. There are few lines in any play more powerful, through restraint, than the plea of Fremont, the editor of the *Dispatch,* before the governor. The same is true of the plea of Callahan, the defense attorney. And who has ever written a more intense scene than that in which, at the governor's hearing, the wife of the condemned man rises, as if about to speak, and then, when the governor turns to her, sits down without a word. Touches like this show a real mastery of dramatic feeling.

The large cast for this play has been unusually well chosen. The actors supply full characterization even when the lines themselves do not indicate it. Perhaps this appears in the stage directions. At all events, the quiet dignity and force of Royal Dana Tracey as Delaney (Mooney's name in the play), the unctious suavity of William Bonelli as the prosecuting attorney, the direct earnestness of Charles Harrison as Callahan, and the superb impetuosity, so swiftly curbed, of Clyde Franklin as Fremont, all contribute mightily to the grip of the illusion. A whole series of minor parts are also taken with minute care in character distinction. The direction by Walter Hart is excellent, with finely varied pace. All in all, this is a play of marked distinction, uncommonly well presented.

Soviet Showmanship

IT BELONGS strictly to the editorial department of this paper to discuss the economic, spiritual and moral aspects of Russia's Five-Year Plan. When, however, the Soviets begin, as they are now doing, to make use of the motion picture to dramatize the workings of that Five-Year Plan, a new and distinct question comes up, namely, just what are the Soviet powers of showmanship?

If the film entitled "The Five-Year Plan," now showing in American theatres, is any fair example, the Soviets, in their economic and mechanistic enthusiasm, and in their negation of spiritual values, have lost whatever dramatic instinct the Russians are supposed to possess. In certain respects, the film is interesting. That is, it serves to lend a much needed sense of actuality to discussions about Russia. It visualizes for us many things which have been merely names. But, curiously enough, it lacks even the dramatic instincts of the patent medicine advertiser, in that it fails to show us in a single instance the contrast of "before and after." It is also guilty of endless repetitions of like scenes and incidents—grain elevators shown not once but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

several times, and at many different stages of the picture, building, riveting and construction operations of quite ordinary caliber repeated without rhyme or reason. Above all, the picture's serious solemnity is unpunctured by the least tiny shaft of humor, or by the least suspicion of grace or artistry.

After all, the essential drama of the Five-Year Plan lies in the effort to accomplish within a brief half-decade a work of industrialization which would normally take four to five decades. To bring home the success of this undertaking through pictures demands more than the mere showing of work now in progress. If, for example, a giant dam for hydro-electric power is being constructed, the whole point would come in showing the river gorge before the work started, then the same scene a year later, followed by the scene as it stands today. That is the only way we can measure progress pictorially—also the only way in which we can catch its dramatic import. The present film never once gives this measure of progress. What it describes thus has a feeling of being static and monotonous. The operation of collectivist farms is exhibited with great enthusiasm, but we are given no pictorial contrast with the old operation of small unit farms. The verbal explanation which accompanies the picture covers some of these points, but words are no adequate counterweight for pictures. There is just one picture which catches a little of the drama of action, and that is the scene of the laying of the last rails of a trunk line railroad, the two spurs approaching one another, and the two groups of workers feverishly spiking the last rail in place. There you have, for an instant, something of the old pioneer drama of the opening of the West, reenacted in modern times. But, here again, you are given no preview of the wilderness through which the new railroad has been driven.

There is even less excuse for the constant repetition of familiar scenes, made even more monotonous through repetitions in the accompanying verbal explanation. Surely, in the vast expanse of Russia, there should be enough material, if carefully selected, to give a quick panoramic effect without going back again and again over old ground. This might easily lead an unprejudiced observer to feel that there is less to the Five-Year Plan than he supposed. It might lead him to question whether all this beehive activity is confined to a few spots, and might arouse his curiosity about a hundred other aspects of Russian life not touched upon.

This leads to the third aspect of the picture I have mentioned —namely its utter lack of humor or grace or a sense of the picturesque. It might quite well be answered that a country trying to do the impossible in five years has no time left for minor amenities. But that is surely a confession of weakness rather than a justification of brute strength. The most serious charge ever brought against American industrialism has been its drabness and ugliness—and the only excuse offered has been the conditions of pioneer effort. But Russia is not a pioneer country in the sense of a wilderness being filled up by migration. It is a country with extraordinary background, tradition and local color. Has all this been ruthlessly thrown aside or else sacrificed to the new industrial god? Certainly there is nothing to fire the poetic imagination in the way the present pictures tells the story of Russian transformation. Nothing is shown of the new Russian art, of the Russian theatre, nor of the individual human values which might possibly be emerging, for good or evil. It is all as mechanistic as a parade of tanks. And that merely caps the estimate of essentially poor showmanship. Hollywood might do a gorgeous job in dramatizing modern Russia—but then, Hollywood, at its best and worst, is not a product of the Soviet idea.

COMMUNICATIONS

DISTRACTIONS OF A CHURCHGOER

Des Moines, Iowa.

TO the Editor: Anent the communication under the caption, "Distractions of a Churchgoer," by Irene Johnson Bolling in THE COMMONWEAL of May 20, I must say that I regret that I did not read the letter of Mr. Eliot B. Wheaton, consequently I do not know the accusations that this gentleman made against Catholics in regard to their knowledge and in the way they assist at Mass.

However, I have read Irene Johnson Bolling's letter and I take it as an opportunity to "let off steam," as it were, and even if I do criticize let it be stated, *hic et nunc,* that I do so not with an aloof puffiness, but sincerely, and with a charitable heart and a humble mind that God may be glorified through His Church militant as well as through the Church triumphant.

Hence I take issue with a few of the statements contained in the above-mentioned letter, which I take to be a blanket defense of the vast majority of our Catholic people in regard to the manner in which they assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

True, as the correspondent states, most of our prayer-books do contain a translation of the Ordinary of the Mass. But what proportion of our Catholic people have one of these prayer-books with them at Mass? And how many use them as they are meant to be used?

Another paragraph of the letter begins, "From earliest childhood, Catholics are taught that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the paramount ceremony and ritual of the Church." Indeed, the most ordinary of instructed non-Catholics might make such a statement, and go unchallenged in the assertion. To the Catholic the Mass is much more than ceremony and ritual—many other organizations have these but they do not have thereby, the Mass.

To Catholics, the Mass is the unbloody sacrifice of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ offered up on our altars under the appearances of bread and wine. Ceremonies and rites, vestments and incense, sacred and measured chant and stately movements are but means to an end; and the end is the action of the Mass when the High Priest, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, offers Himself to the Eternal Father through the ministry of His earthly priests and that people who, "are a purchased people, a royal priesthood." Hence, it logically follows that this purchased people and royal priesthood should take an active part with the priest in the offering of this most august sacrifice.

The assertion that most of the Catholic people "know their Mass prayers by heart," is, I believe, going a bit too far. Would that it were so and then we should have more collective prayer and less individualistic aspirations during Mass. As it is, there is a wholesale neglect of and disregard for that treasure book of the Church, the Missal—that book which as the late Archbishop Austin Dowling of St. Paul said, "contains the crystallized thought and prayer of Latin Christianity, of its saints and martyrs and holy priests throughout the centuries."

To say that "it is much more inspiring while we pray to keep our eyes upon the altar, than our noses buried in a book" is, I think, to ask the question as regards the ability of the most of us poor sinners to keep our eyes upon the altar and likewise to keep our minds in a meditative mood, especially in any city parish where it seems to be fashionable for a few of the parishioners to be habitually late; not to mention the many other more or less unavoidable distractions that cause even the most stable and mystical minded to forget the altar in so far as their eyes are concerned. Perhaps the beauty of the altar and sanctuary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would have some attraction for the eye. But this, granting that it be a fact and in itself good (since it is chiefly through the senses that we are lifted up to things that are invisible), is beside the point since God demands that we love Him with all our heart and mind and with all our strength, viz., a united love and service. Consequently, Pope Pius X's admonition to the Christian world and the motto that he chose for his Pontificate was that "all things be restored in Christ." And the same saintly Pontiff declared that the liturgy of the Church was "the first and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

And so we have in our own day, the liturgical apostolate, that small-in-number but ever-growing and becoming-more-vigorous leavening power which numbers among its members some of the most eminent and learned of the hierarchy as well as many of the clergy both secular and regular, Sisters of the various orders as well as hundreds of our lay people, banded together in spirit that all things may be restored in Christ, through the active participation of all the people in assisting at the liturgical services of the Church.

Pope Pius X repeatedly directed, "Pray the Mass." It is not enough just to be present during the Holy Mysteries but—pray the Mass. It seems only logical, therefore, that the best possible way to pray the Mass would be to use the Mass prayers as found in the Missal. Hence, not only our noses but our eyes as well should be most of the time "buried" in a book.

And so if it be true, as has been said, that "order is heaven's first law," then for heaven's sake and our own, let there be gradual but sure return to the correct and orderly way of assisting at the liturgical services of the Church.

ORVILLE L. BINKERD.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Irene Johnson Bolling is deeply pained at the letter of Mr. Eliot B. Wheaton printed in THE COMMONWEAL of March 25. All I can say is that I am deeply pained to find that the only answer called forth by Mr. Wheaton's letter was an adverse opinion. To my mind, Mr. Wheaton's letter was a masterpiece in both composition and content.

It seems to me that the mere existence and generally admitted need of such a movement as the liturgical one, justifies Mr. Wheaton's letter. As to the "numerous Catholic publications read by millions of Catholics," I wonder if Irene Johnson Bolling realizes the comparatively small circulations of THE COMMONWEAL, *America* and the *Catholic World?*

W. D. HENNESSY.

VOICE FROM THE GRAVE

Rome, Italy.

TO the Editor: The January 28 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, tells of a remarkable tribute to Cardinal Mercier in the recently published memoirs of Baron von der Lancken, who was chief of the political department of the administration of the German Governor-General of Belgium during the war. As I read his remark, "He was too wise to hate," it caused me to recall how the source of all his wisdom was made evident by the great cardinal's reply when asked if, in using the Lord's Prayer, he included Belgium's war enemies: "The Lord does not appear to have made any distinction. He simply says, 'As we forgive those who trespass against us.' Yes, I am sure that includes our late enemies."

STELLA WENTZ WOOD.

B. ALTMAN & CO.
Fifth Ave. at 34th St.
Tel: MUrray Hill 2-7000
Gentlemen's Outfitters

White Ground Cravats

The trend toward white grounds for striped and figured neckwear is already marked among well-dressed men. Altman makes the first comprehensive showing of these stunning new effects — smart club stripes, spaced figures against white or ivory grounds have been developed for us in beautifully tying materials.

Especially good style is shown through combining these new ties with shirts of plain coloring — blue, grey, tan.

"Seaspun" a tropical weight fabric made of pure silk, is also being featured in Altman Neckwear for early Summer.

These Smart New Ties Are Variously Priced

$1.50 and $2

MEN'S NECKWEAR
FIRST FLOOR

Altman Suburban Stores

Altman-Westchester
White Plains, N. Y.

Altman-New Jersey
East Orange, N. J.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MULTIFOLD WAR GUILT

Shipley, England.

TO the Editor: The article which you publish in your issue of April 29, which has just reached England, pleading for the revision of the Treaty of Versailles and other war treaties raises in the European mind the question which is raised by all such pleas, whether written by former enemies or by neutrals, the question of definition. What exactly is demanded, I do not say in detail, but even in the largest outline? What do those who ask for revision want those who won the war to do? Until we have an answer to that the discussion is futile.

Do they want Italy to give up the few miles of the Upper Adige valley to the summit of the Brenner? Do they want the Poles to accept Prussian government over them in the Polish part of Pomerania? Do they want the strip of former Hungarian territory given (mainly by American pressure) to the government of Prague restored to Hungary? Do they want the great lump of Translyvania which is mainly Rumanian in speech but Catholic in religion and which used to be Hungarian in government, taken away from its present non-Catholic Rumanian rulers and given back to Hungary, or made independent, or what? Do they want the peoples of the Reich to be relieved of the heavy tribute they now pay to America through the French and English acting as collectors for America; and of the much lighter tribute which they pay as reparations to France? That demand is one capable of clear definition and if it were granted would have very great results. They must want one or more of these things.

Now before any answer can be given by any European with enough knowledge of the subject to talk of it at all, he must be told which or how many of these points is demanded. Then he can go into the matter. Mere vague complaint that the defeated have suffered and the victors have won leads nowhere.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

VOICES IN THE DESERT

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: Dr. Delany's article, "Voices in the Desert," in your number of May 6, refers to a speech of the Archbishop of Prague in which he deplores Catholic neglect of the cinema, says they must "hasten to make amends" (quotation from Dr. Delany) and suggests that Catholic educational movies instead of being limited to lives of the saints and conventional pious tales, should "deal particularly with social questions."

I have lately had an object lesson of the value of movies on educational lines. Shortly after reading your article, I opened the May number of *American Forests* and came across a picture of children watching a performance of one of the motion picture trucks sent out by the Forestry Association to educate people in the Southern rural districts on conservation, fire protection, etc. It is an excellent picture in which all the expressions on the young faces are vividly portrayed. The children are not merely looking at the movie; their minds are absorbing it. It is a striking example of the power of training through the eye.

It would be interesting to have some opinions on the type of scenario that we need and who is best qualified to write them. Then there is the question of where they should be shown. Would some enthusiastic young Georgians or Texans care to drive a Catholic motion picture truck through their states to counteract prejudice? Are we carrying on better than they are in Europe? Or do we leave this form of instruction to the Bolsheviks who boast of having used it with enormous success?

ANNE SQUIRE.

BOOKS

The Liturgical Movement

Liturgia; edited by Abbé R. Aigrain. Paris: Bloud et Gay. 57 francs.

Notes on the Catholic Liturgies, by Archdale A. King. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $7.50.

Vestments and Vesture, by Dom E. A. Roulin, O.S.B.; translated by Dom Justin McNabb, O.S.B. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company. $6.50.

THE APPEARANCE within a short time of three such books is an inspiring sign of the liturgical movement's vitality and problems.

Though described as a "popular encyclopaedia of liturgical knowledge," "Liturgia" will be ardently welcomed by scholars also. It is a marvel of inclusiveness, containing in a single handy volume exhaustive studies, by competent authorities, of every aspect of the liturgy: theological, canonical, historical and devotional. Its illustrations are worthy of the text, abundant and chosen with fine discrimination. It succeeds, in short, in being an encyclopaedia without a dull page, invaluable for reference, but likewise readable from cover to cover. One scarcely ventures to hope for an English translation, since the number of prospective purchasers who cannot read the original is probably insufficient to justify the undertaking. But to students of the liturgy conversant with French, "Liturgia" is not merely recommended, it is unique and essential.

Mr. King's excellent book, though narrower in scope, is more comprehensive than its modest title would imply. It wisely does not attempt to rival the completeness of Fortescue's classic study of the Roman rite, but contains a great deal of information hard to obtain elsewhere on the derived monastic rites (perhaps better described as "uses"), the other surviving Western rites, and the Byzantine and Armenian rites. The treatment of the little known rite of Braga is especially instructive. The remaining Oriental rites used by Catholics will be dealt with in a second volume.

The reviewer had hoped to find some discussion of liturgical survivals, early Roman or Gallican, in various French dioceses, such as the very ancient *Laudes* sung at Rouen after the epistle at pontifical Mass—even Fortescue seems to thing this litany extinct!—and the Prefaces still used at Paris and elsewhere, some of which, but not all, appear to have been borrowed from Lyons, or if Mr. King insists, "Lyon." Thus the superb Preface of the Blessed Sacrament used in the primatial diocese is still found also, for example, in the dioceses of Coutances and Avranches. It ends with words identical with those of the antiphon, "O Sacrum Convivum," sung at second vespers of Saint Thomas's Office of Corpus Christi, and prescribed by the Roman ritual for the administration of Holy Communion outside of Mass. The tracing of the relationship between these facts would be an interesting study in historical liturgics.

A small point that Mr. King might have mentioned, since he speaks of the Servites including their founders in the Confiteor, is the fact that Saint Benedict and Saint Francis are similarly included by their spiritual sons in their otherwise purely Roman Masses. Such omissions, however, are indeed minute amid the wealth of important data that Mr. King has given us. May the results of his patient researches be welcomed by many readers, and soon completed by his second volume!

The translation of Dom Roulin's work on vestments fulfills a long-felt want by giving us a thorough, practical and amply illustrated English book on this important subject.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A noteworthy feature is the chapter on the much discussed lawfulness of "ample" chasubles—or dare one whisper that "Gothic" seems after all a convenient term? Their legality is well argued for, yet though it is certainly both intrinsically and extrinsically probable, as the moralists would say, will someone explain just what the mysterious decree of 1925 *did* mean?

In view of the book's general excellence, it is with regret that the reviewer confesses his not infrequent inability to agree with the aesthetic verdicts of Dom Roulin, both favorable and unfavorable. He cannot share the author's approval of the very banal rose illustrated on page 257 or of the sanctuary shown in Plate IV. The latter, like several others sketched or photographed, though liturgically correct, is bad in scale and in other ways unpleasing. On the other hand, he does not agree that the symbolic pelican should be "left in its native haunts." Properly rendered, it can be as beautiful as it is significant. Nor are the checked trimmings shown on page 246 either "modern" or "fatiguing to the eye." They are thoroughly mediaeval, and experience testifies to their beauty when judiciously used. Other examples might be cited where many readers and designers are likely to disagree with Dom Roulin. But surely all should sympathize with his general principles and spirit, and his learned and stimulating book should be a powerful incentive toward greater beauty in the garments worn in our sanctuaries.

T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

Pioneer

Mère Marie of the Ursulines, by Agnes Repplier. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

BY ONE of those happy accidents which surely ought to be classed among at least the minor dispensations of Providence, my reading of Agnes Repplier's story of Mother Mary of the Incarnation happened to coincide with my reading of the introduction by Father R. H. J. Steuart, S.J., to Hersey Wauchope's brief but vivid study of still another of those heroic women saints whom France has given so generously to the world, Marie Eustelle Harpain. "The worst of all biographies are the lives of the saints," says Father Steuart. "One may say this without prejudice to those brilliant exceptions which of recent years have really begun to give one hope that the reproach may soon pass away. . . . The writers of the lives of the saints have suffered too long from the tyranny of a formula. One feels that they have consistently written to a syllogism, 'A saint acts in such-and-such a way: So-and-so was a saint: therefore. . . . ' Character, age, century, nationality, up-bringing and so forth went for nothing, or at best were noted as mere accessories; they were not recognized as the coördinates of the person to whom they belonged; they were not allowed (or scarcely so) to explain anything in him; if they did not fit into the picture according to plan, they were left out of it. The result has been simply this, that in the mind of the average reader the saints have formed a class altogether remote from the ordinary run of humanity with which he is acquainted; they might as well be the inhabitants of another planet; they hardly touch actuality at any point."

This book by Agnes Repplier is not only one of the brilliant exceptions hailed by Father Steuart, but at every point except one it triumphantly defeats the tyranny of the deadly formula of hagiography, as described by Father Steuart, giving us the living figure of a woman who was a human being as well as a saint. Miss Repplier calls her book a study in adventure. She never selects her words at random: it is the very mark of her exquisitely successful literary skill that she uses language with

JOHN B. STETSON COMPANY HAS NO AFFILIATION WITH RADIO STATION WHAP

This statement is published as a ***denial*** of the reports that the manufacturers of STETSON HATS are sponsoring broadcasts over Station WHAP.

John B. Stetson Company has no affiliation with that or any other radio station, and is not responsible for any statement made over it.

JOHN B. STETSON COMPANY, Philadelphia

GEORGETOWN VISITATION CONVENT
Washington, D. C.
A BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
College preparatory and general courses.
Accredited by the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Middle States and Maryland.
Junior College and secretarial courses.
Accredited by the American Association of Junior Colleges.
Abundance of outdoor life and recreation.
131st Year
Address the Sister Directress
1500 35th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

REGIS COLLEGE
WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS
A Catholic Institution for the Higher Education of Women. Incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with full power to confer degrees. Standard Courses leading to the degrees, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (Curricula in Household Economics and in Secretarial Science.)
Affiliated to the Catholic University, Washington, D. C.
Degrees "fully approved" by the University of the State of New York.
Conducted by the SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH.
For Catalogue, address:
The Registrar

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEXT WEEK

WHAT CAN WE DO? by George N. Shuster is a paper which suggests the steps for a stable and Christian solution of injustices that the author feels are embittering and poisoning world conditions. This from the vantage of his experience is an answer to the questions in Mr. Belloc's letter in this issue. . . . S. JEANNE D'ARC, by Henri Massis, introduction to the French edition of Belloc's biography of the saint, is a paean sometimes somewhat warlike of the miraculous intervention of a maid as the agent of that "supernatural politic that is of God, really active, dominating the politic of terrestrial government.". . . HOOVER AND CENTRAL AMERICA, by Oliver McKee, jr., is a searching, informative and splendidly just analysis by a Washington correspondent of the new United States policy with regard to Central America. . . . KATHERINE TYNAN HINKSON, by Hester Sigerson Piatt, is an appreciation and a personal reminiscence of a poetess that is altogether charming in its sensitiveness and its warmth of long-founded affection. . . . LADY OF THE CENACLE, by Katherine Burton, is a dream of solid and insubstantial things between a city and a river. . . . STYLE AND STORY-TELLING, by Benedict Fitzpatrick, literarily considers in a manner that the literary legitimately enjoy (as legitimately as any baseball fan enjoys clever fielding), some questions of importance to the connoisseur of letters. . . . MYSTERIOUS MIXTECA, by John Newman Page, which has been held over to next week, tells of a colorful and extraordinary region twice the size of the state of Connecticut, untouched by railroads at any point and about to have its first motor road in the Pan-American Highway, which will make it accessible to the visitor from the United States.

the conscious but never strained dexterity of an impeccable artist. Her choice of a subtitle, then, is supremely right. Mère Marie truly was an adventurer; not only because of the fact that she was a pioneer in colonial Quebec, the founder and leader of a great religious community in the wilderness, herself dealing with and mastering physical and moral hardships and perils, but also because from her girlhood to her death in her seventieth year she was with powerful purpose following the path of the greatest adventure possible to man or woman: the mystic quest, the uniting of her soul to the Deity.

It is this adventure which, it seems to me, is not quite adequately dealt with by Miss Repplier. It is true that she tells us that Mère Marie was a mystic; but the fact is merely stated. Miss Repplier does not trace the inner, higher, supremely spiritual life of her heroine with the same vigorous realism devoted to the other aspects of that great career. Yet among those rare and highly exceptional souls whose lives and writings supply the material for the study of mysticism—Saints Teresa, John of the Cross, Francis, Catherine and the others—the Ursuline pioneer of New France stands high. In his monumental book on mysticism, "The Graces of Interior Prayer," Father Poulain devotes many pages to her. But perhaps Miss Repplier is right in refraining from the difficulties of that theme. Most of the all too numerous dull and boring lives of holy people fail for the very reason that they unsuccessfully attempt to deal too fully with the supernatural elements of their subjects.

The very important fact about Catholic mysticism which the life of Mère Marie so gloriously illustrates, the fact that Catholic mystics are anything but idle dreamers, are the very opposite of sentimentalists, this is fully grasped by Miss Repplier. Her picture of the strong, practical Frenchwoman: a wife, a mother, a widow, before she became a cloistered nun, and who while never remitting her mystic quest was at the same time a keen business woman, a most able executive and ruler of a community, and a great diplomat in her dealings with military and civil officials, and always an individual, herself, as Walt Whitman says, a single, separate person—this picture, Miss Repplier beautifully, wittily, clearly and vividly paints.

"Mère Marie of the Ursulines" was the April choice of the Catholic Book of the Month Club.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS.

Who Began the War?

Breaking the Silence: England, Ireland, Wilson and the War, by T. St. John Gaffney. New York: Horace Liveright, Incorporated. $3.50.

A HIGH-MINDED Catholic gentleman, Irish-born, eminent in the legal profession in this his adopted country, and honored by appointment to the consulate-generalship of the United States in Dresden and later in Munich, T. St. John Gaffney was a genial stormy petrel in the days when war was shaking the world. Like so many others who played rôles great or small in that tragedy, he has written his book about it, and a worth-while book it is—exciting, packed with fact, and merciless in uncovering the depths that human dishonesty, venom and meanness can sink to in wartime.

"Breaking the Silence" would seem an inaccurate title, for Mr. Gaffney never kept silent under injustice or in the face of things he considered condemnable. His book is a recapitulation of many facts and points of view voiced long ago but overwhelmed by the vociferations of propaganda. The world now consents to read these things and weigh them. But although it is today admitted by virtually all thinking Americans

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—and Englishmen too—that Germany was not solely responsible for the terrible visitation of 1914-1918, that the war-time picture of Germany and Germans was false and outrageous, and that things were done and said by Germany's foes which are too painful to think upon, yet many will resent the vigor of Mr. Gaffney's attack and the sweeping nature of his statements. All that can be asked in such cases is that this book be read with a desire to arrive at the truth by thinking out all the implications of the amazing things therein related.

By its nature the volume is loosely integrated. It contains the story of the author's own acts and the persecutions they brought upon him, and, in addition, much of the story of the Irish effort for freedom, and, finally, a summary of some of the evidence discrediting the war-guilt hypothesis embedded in the Treaty of Versailles, and casting grave shadow upon the historical justification of our intervention in the conflict. Under the last head are noted only a handful of facts already adduced and published. No complete picture of the Irish advance toward the partial liberation of 1921 could be made from Mr. Gaffney's pages, but he is the authoritative source for some curious side-chapters of that story, such as the German-Irish Society and the efforts to woo the Socialist International at Stockholm. The story of Mr. Gaffney's own incredible treatment at the hands of his government and of the British is naturally the longest, most curious and most important feature of the book.

If complete neutrality were posible to human beings, doubtless some of the open evidence which Mr. Gaffney gave of his sympathy with the Germans in war-time would not have been given. Yet he never went beyond technical propriety, and he never displayed toward the people to whom he was accredited partiality as open and marked as that displayed toward the Allied nations by American diplomats and consuls accredited to them. Palpable lies were made the basis for his severance from the consular service. One of these lies was the charge of discourtesy to Americans in Munich; another was the charge of neglect of the interests of Britons caught by the outbreak of war in the same city; a more outrageous one was the charge that Mr. Gaffney expressed the wish that he had fired the torpedo that sank the Lusitania. The first charge was refuted by the signed statements of eminent Americans; the second, by the signed testimonial of eminent Britons; the third, by the signed statements of the only auditors of the conversation on which the charge was based.

Mr. Gaffney traces his dismissal and subsequent petty persecution to the Anglophilism of Woodrow Wilson. Many agree with him. Anyone disposed to differ can at least be sure of a lively hour by reading his uncompromising book.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Anent the Confederacy

Europe and the American Civil War, by Donaldson Jordan and Edwin J. Pratt. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.00.

IF THIS were a history, it would be open to serious objection, for it leaves out such matters as the details of the Trent Affair and the cruises of the Alabama. It is, however, a historical commentary and if one allows the theory of the authors —that American-European history is based on cultural and economic influence, without leaving room for much else—the things it brings to light are extremely valuable and mostly fresh.

Nevertheless, one is compelled to disagree with the fundamental viewpoint. Most of the book is devoted to the influence of England on the Civil War and at the close of 1862 England

CLUB MANAGEMENT

Two Catholic college bred young women, trained in home economics and who are now in active management of a metropolitan club, wish to make connections with a club or home. Capable of creating a practical atmosphere of culture and social activity; also of operating the highest type of dining room with well balanced meals.

References of our ability may be obtained from many of New York's leading hotel and club managers.

Box M., THE COMMONWEAL

MARYMOUNT COLLEGE

CASTLE RIDGE, TARRYTOWN-ON-HUDSON, N. Y.

40 minutes from N. Y. City. Confers B.A., B.S., M.A. Degrees. Membership in all the standard Educational Associations. Music, Art, Elocution, Pedagogy, Journalism, Domestic Science, Secretarial, Dramatics.

MARYMOUNT SCHOOL IN WILSON PARK, TARRYTOWN

Two Year Pre-Academic — College Preparatory — Junior College.

Riding, Gym., Stadium, Swimming Pool, Sports, Games, for all departments.

Branches: **Paris, France; Rome, Italy; 5th Ave., N. Y. C.**

Address REVEREND MOTHER

College of
St. Elizabeth

FULLY accredited and recognized Catholic College for women, offering A.B., B.S. degrees. Also Teacher-training and Home Economics courses. Beautiful 400 acre wooded campus, one hour from New York. Attractive residence halls. All indoor and outdoor sports and social activities. For catalog and view book, write, Dean, Box K, Convent Station, N. J.

CAMP ST. JOSEPH

For Boys and For Girls

Two separately conducted camps for select Catholic children

Situated on opposite shores of Lake St. Dominic. All buildings of substantial construction, thoroughly modern, equipped with electricity and running water. All land and water sports. Resident chaplain, physician and nurses. Cuisine under the management of the Sisters of St. Dominic.

Rate, $200 for Season of Nine Weeks

Write for illustrated booklet of either camp

RT. REV. MSGR. VINCENT ARCESE
ST. JOSEPH'S SULLIVAN COUNTY, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Every Catholic Should Know

The Catholic Periodical Index

Priests, Sisters, and Laymen in Schools, Colleges, and Parishes need this new reference work.

Endorsed by prominent Catholics and the National Catholic Educational Association.

Bishop Bernard J. Sheil of Chicago states: "This new service fills a long felt want by making accessible for ready reference the wealth of excellent material published in our Catholic magazines. *The Catholic Periodical Index* is a boon to students, as it is likewise to the many busy priests, sisters and laymen. For these it saves much valuable time. I send my congratulations and best wishes to the Founders and Editorial Board of *The Catholic Periodical Index*. May this fine work which has had so auspicious a beginning continue to grow and to increase the scope of the excellent service it is offering."

Dr. Richard J. Purcell, General Secretary of the Catholic University of America finds "*The Catholic Periodical Index* of real service. It is a work much needed and extremely well done."

The first annual cumulation for 1930 of *The Catholic Periodical Index* is now being published. A limited edition of this ANNUAL in a cloth bound volume is offered at $4.50 a copy. Your order will be appreciated. Mail it TODAY.

F. E. FITZGERALD Date.....1931
Editor, THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX
331 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania, U. S. A.

Enter our order for ..... cop... of the 1930 ANNUAL Cumulation of THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX, at $4.50 per copy. ☐ Bill.
☐ Check enclosed.

Signed .....

Street .....

City ..... State .....

was close to intervention on the side of the Confederacy. The real truth is that the chief enemy of the United States from the very beginning was not Lord Palmerston but Napoleon III, who gets only a chapter in this essay. Both Palmerston and Lord John Russell were carelessly indifferent at first, so long as England's rights were not infringed, but before Lincoln had even been inaugurated Napoleon was dreaming of bringing the western hemisphere under French influence.

His plan, repeated over and over again, was for a recognition of the Confederacy by England, France and Russia. For a year or so England was negatively indifferent, but every time Napoleon brought forward his fine scheme Russia squelched him. The real story of American-European relations during that war, though one would not guess it from this book, is one of French warlike hostility and Russian friendship toward the United States. England was at last dragged into the position of supporting Napoleon, but he never could budge Russia. Russia, of course, means Alexander II, since there was no public opinion in that country. At the same time, what put an end to the vision of breaking up the Monroe Doctrine and planting foreign flags from Maine to Argentina was not the czar's friendship, but the performances in 1863 of such gentlemen as Grant, Meade, Thomas, Porter and others. The smashing Union victories left Napoleon with no hope, and in September, Dr. Pratt tells us, John Slidell was consoling himself with the fact that at any rate the Empress Eugénie openly sympathized with his cause. Slidell was the Confederate commissioner at Paris, and before Vicksburg and Gettysburg he had counted confidently on a rescue of the Confederacy by armed Europe with Napoleon at its head. The sympathetic observations of Eugénie were the last crumbs of comfort the Confederates ever got from Europe. Not long after Sherman was marching through Georgia, and Dr. Pratt says, "By spring of 1864, Napoleon had definitely abandoned the South."

Even allowing for the overemphasis of England's part in the conspiracy against this country, Dr. Jordan does not hold the scales quite evenly. He thinks, for instance, that John Bright's influence in behalf of the Union is overestimated. The only foundation for this opinion seems to be that Bright did not make speeches on the subject in the House of Commons. It would have been a waste of breath for him to do so. Where he did make speeches was before audiences in Lancashire, and it was Lancashire's determined pro-Unionism that nullified the Confederate sympathies of the aristocracy. Despite these defects of vision on the part of the authors, they have done a work of importance, not least in bringing out hidden or forgotten influences on both sides of the contention.

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON.

People's Banks

Credit Union: A Coöperative Banking Book, by Roy F. Bergengren. New York: The Beekman Hill Press. $1.50.

THE CREDIT UNION is the American institution that corresponds to the Schulze-Delitsch and the Raiffeisen co-operative credit societies of Europe and the Caisse Populaire of Quebec, and the author of the book is the executive secretary of the Credit Union National Extension Bureau organized and financed on a philanthropic basis by Mr. E. A. Filene of Boston. The book tells of the European forebears of the Credit Union and of M. Alphonse Desjardins of Quebec who was made a Commander of the Order of St. Gregory by the Pope for his work in organizing people's banks. It tells too of the need for coöperative banks, of the way to organize and conduct them, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the success which has attended their introduction into the United States.

Catholic readers will turn with interest to the section devoted to the parish credit union and will note the list of thirty-seven credit unions established in Catholic parishes during 1930. These coöperative credit societies have been organized under the inspiration of the Catholic Central Verein and the Parish Credit Union National Committee of the N. C. W. C. working in coöperation with Mr. Bergengren's bureau. "Assuming that this credit union interest and activity within parishes of the Catholic Church can be duplicated within the Protestant Church," says Mr. Bergengren, "an extraordinary new field to credit union activity will open up, which will not only help to introduce coöperative credit to the American farmer but which may well exceed, eventually, the urban credit union development." A suggestion of their urban development is seen in the fact that from a beginning in 1923 there were in 1930 in the United States postal service alone 246 credit unions of postal employees which had in the short period of their existence made more than a hundred thousand loans aggregating more than twelve million dollars.

Mr. Bergengren is especially well pleased with the manner in which the credit unions are weathering the present severe depression. "At this writing," he says, "not a single credit union with which I have been identified during the past ten years of preliminary organization work has passed through the process of involuntary liquidation." His account of them is well worth reading.

FRANK O'HARA.

A Text

Essays for College English; compiled by William E. Brennan. New York: The Century Co. $2.00.

THIS collection of essays, compiled as models for the freshman student of composition, is one of "The Century Catholic Texts." The merits of the collection are obvious: the stimulating quality of the essays; the emphasis throughout on constructive thought, which, in its main outlines—though all of the essays are not Catholic in authorship—conforms to Catholic principles, and admits, therefore, of some degree of correlation between the various sectional divisions; the variety of sources from which the essays are drawn, ranging from the seventeenth century to our own and from England to America; and the excellent format which makes the volume a pleasure to handle.

There are, however, certain defects in the selection and grouping of the material. For use in a composition course, an arrangement based on form rather than on thought would seem more practicable. And, in other respects, the classification—which includes "Life," "Education," "Culture," "Literature," "Democracy" and a group of miscellaneous essays—is not satisfying. Life is too vague a caption for essays chiefly philosophical in tone. The section devoted to education is so limited in extent that it might well have been merged with that on culture. The group on democracy could have been enlarged to include other aspects of social development.

As regards the character of the selection, there is a preponderance of essays of thought and opinion; yet even these fail to include the historical essay and the essay on science. In the realm of the personal essay, moreover, we miss certain types—those, for instance, dealing with persons, places and nature; though, in the last category, Belloc's "Mowing of a Field" offers at least one delightful exception.

ELEANOR DOWNING.

MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY
CATONSVILLE, MARYLAND
Conducted by the Sisters of the Visitation
High School—Resident and Day Pupils
Affiliated with the Catholic University of America
Day School—Grades IV to VIII
Write to the Directress for further information

CAMP ON-TI-ORA
IN THE CATSKILL MOUNTAINS
Superior Catholic Camp for Girls
All field and water sports. Riding. Highest camping standards. Select membership. Experienced counsellors. Booklet on request.
MISS JOSEPHINE COWHEY
730 Riverside Drive New York, N. Y.

SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD
SUFFERN, NEW YORK
Among the Ramapo Hills
Boarding—Day School for Girls
Approved by the University of the State of New York
Grammar—High School Classes—College Preparatory
Address: Rev. Mother Superior

RAVENHILL
GERMANTOWN, PA. Boarding and Day School for Girls
Conducted by the Religious of the Assumption
College Preparatory and General Courses
Apply to THE REVEREND MOTHER, Academy of the Assumption, School House Lane, Germantown, Pa.

Bind Every Volume
Volume XIV Now Ready

In response to numerous requests from subscribers we have arranged to supply attractive binders for individual volumes of THE COMMONWEAL.

The binders are loose leaf with a capacity of twenty-six issues. They are handsomely bound in red imitation leather with stiff covers, red skytogen lined. The backbone of the cover is stamped in gold with the number of the volume and its inclusive dates. The price of the binder is $1.65 postage paid to any address.

In ordering the binders specify the number of copies you desire and the number of the volume. Please indicate if you wish to be placed on our list to receive future binders as issued.

THE COMMONWEAL
Grand Central Terminal
New York City

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rosary College

For High School graduates. Excellent equipment, unusual surroundings, interesting campus life.
Modern, fully accredited degree courses—A.B., B.S., in Music and in Library Science.
Conducted by the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin 30-acre Campus. Junior Year in French Switzerland, optional. Moderate Rates.
Address: Secretary, Box C
River Forest (30 minutes from Chicago) Illinois

PIUS X SCHOOL OF LITURGICAL MUSIC
COLLEGE OF THE SACRED HEART
133rd Street and Convent Avenue
New York
Gregorian Chant—Gregorian Accompaniment—Justine Ward Method — Polyphony — Boy Choir — Theory — Harmony — Counterpoint—Liturgy—Liturgical Singing—Organ—Piano—Violin
SUMMER SCHOOL OPENS JULY 7th—CLOSES AUGUST 14th
Registration Day, July 6th
Registrations will be accepted any time by mail
For further information, address the Secretary—BRadhurst 2-8000

St. Hilda Guild, Inc.
CHURCH VESTMENTS, ALTAR LINEN
Ecclesiastical Embroidery
Conferences with reference to the adornment of churches
Old Embroidery Transferred
131 EAST 47th STREET NEW YORK
EL dorado 5-1058

THE PARIS STUDY GROUP
For Women of American Catholic Colleges
Organization affiliated with the Sorbonne and Catholic University of Paris. Accepts graduates and juniors of American Catholic Colleges who major in French. Full credit for junior year given, as well as Sorbonne diplomas and teaching certificates. Courses in French, History, Philosophy, English, Music, etc.
Girls live with best class of French families. Trips to Italy, England, etc., arranged during holidays. Careful supervision of health and general welfare. Cultural activities include weekly sightseeing, excursions, concerts, plays. Special approval by members of the American hierarchy.
For further information address:
PROFESSOR RENÉ SAMSON, McLean, Virginia.

BURR PRINTING HOUSE
FOUNDED 1837
FRANKFORT AND JACOB STREETS
NEW YORK, N. Y.
CATALOGUES, MAGAZINES, BOOKS
AND COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Briefer Mention

A Richer Dust, by Storm Jameson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated. $3.00.

IN THIS final volume of the Mary Hervey trilogy, the central character slowly mellows out of life, not with a fruit-like mellowness, becoming overripe and soft, but like a small, brown nut, the flavor and richness of which are enfolded within a smooth, hard shell. Miss Jameson shows restraint and artistry in her handling of what is always a finely conceived character. Sometimes she is less successful with her younger generation. The men are a woman's conception of men and the younger women conceived without the varied shading of the heroine, though Jenny Ling's shallow futility is well presented. One would have liked to see more of Maria Roxby, whose fleeting romance with Nicolas gave the opening chapter an aching kind of charm. Miss Jameson's chief fault is a tendency to discuss her characters at times in the manner of an interviewer. When she lets them act and speak for themselves, they are vivid and alive. Altogether, the book is finely wrought and in many respects a maturer achievement than either "The Lovely Ship" or "The Voyage Home." It is filled with unforgettable bits such as "a small, late-reveling bird," or: "She saw a ship lying over to the waves. The sun washed her spreading canvas with light; blotted with green and purple the sea stretched away from her on all sides. Now she was lifting to a wave, now lost in its green valley. The cries of gulls followed." Indeed, throughout are innumerable passages as lovely as a white ship on a many-colored sea.

A Tale of a Tub, by Jonathan Swift. New York: Columbia University Press. $3.00.

THE VIRTUES of the present semi-ornate edition of Swift's ironic masterpiece are many. To begin with Mr. Edward Hodnett, the editor, has toiled commendably and followed the text of the fifth edition in every wise excepting punctuation. Such notes and translations as are needed have been boldly and conveniently inserted into the discourse, so that no turning or thumbing is required. Woodcuts by Messrs. Locke and Chappell—this is the first modern illustrated edition—adorn the text with droll and likable art. Very particularly worthy of honor is the printing, which exemplifies the best traditions of the George Grady Press—a typographical establishment of which New York may rightly be proud.

CONTRIBUTORS

REV. J. ELLIOT ROSS is the author of "Christian Ethics."
REV. JOHN K. RYAN is at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.
KATHERINE BRÉGY is a critic and poet and the author of "The Poet's Chantry" and "Poets and Pilgrims."
JOHN RICHARD MORELAND, Virginia poet, critic and teacher of versification, is the author of several books of poetry and contributes verse to periodicals.
ABBÉ ERNEST DIMNET is an authority on English and French literature and politics. He is the author of "France Herself Again" and "The Art of Thinking."
The late ERNEST HARTSOCK was editor of *Bozart* and the author of "Narcissus and Iscariot."
JAMES W. LANE is a general critic of literature and the arts, now residing in New York.
VINCENT ENGELS, formerly a member of THE COMMONWEAL staff, is now residing in parts unknown.
REV. T. LAWRASON RIGGS is the chaplain of the Catholic Club at Yale University.
SHAEMAS O'SHEEL, poet, reviewer and essayist, is the author of "Dead Leaves."
CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON is a veteran political correspondent for New York journals. His latest book is "Presidents I've Known and Two Near Presidents."
FRANK O'HARA is professor of economics in the Catholic University of America, and editor of *Catholic Rural Life*.
ELEANOR DOWNING is a member of the faculty of Smith College, Northampton, Mass.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED